



**MODERN ANTHOLOGIES**  
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**TRAVEL WRITING**

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# AN ANTHOLOGY OF MODERN TRAVEL WRITING

*Edited by*  
H. M. Tomlinson



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## PREFACE AND PROSPECT

It was dangerous for a man to sleep in the light of the full moon, it used to be thought. His mind would be touched. The moon got at it. On waking he would be another fellow, retaining his unprofitable dreams with his eyes open. And men have been lost through going after music they fancied they heard, something piped in the distance, when nobody else could hear a sound. No wise warning would stop them. They went, and were lost to their friends. It is necessary to point out, in this foreword, that a good narrative of travel may have the same effect on us as the moon or distant music. We have to be on our guard. An anthology from stories of travel could not do it, but, meaning no harm, it might quote from a book and name it, and that book could work the spell, if a reader went to it and were a likely subject.

Should we hear the call of those far pipes, the trouble is that doubts vanish. We forget then that Pan is dead, or else believe we were misinformed about it. The horns of elfland change the consequence of immediate reality. Off we go, unless held back. The enchantment will fade, it is almost certain, if we are held back long enough ; though whether that is good or bad for us I do not know. When a boy, I read an enticing



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of travel by a man who was once a factor for Hudson Bay Company, but I was held back. Instance can be almost as hard and faithful as a restraining tombstone ; and anyhow, it is easy and never was to find a ship bound for Fox's Bay, and harder still to board her. So we have not yet reached the Canadian Barren Land ; the Great Lone Land, it was also called. Only look at those names ! The map of that time, I must confess, has others as good, and I still retain for me a faint trace of their old names, whenever I see them ; and I saw one again recently. It was in a letter. A young lady wrote to me, and her address at the time was a little beyond the Arctic Circle, in the land of the Fox. She greatly surprised me. How did she reach that point beyond the outposts ? Such a journey would take most of the brief spring summer of the Northland, and if a traveller did not get out of it again before winter shut the door, he might be imprisoned till doomsday. Yet it seemed this lady had leisure there in time to read a book of mine, and was constrained to let me know it, so little did the prospect of the journey through desolation trouble her. I asked why in a postscript. She was flying as usual. One flies there and back now. The journey there had never occurred to me. Such names as Back, Hearne, Peary, and Warburton Pike were in my mind, but they had not flown, but had their work cut out for them. A deal of the attraction of that inaccessible spot by the shore of the frozen sea was the long and difficult journey thither, by land and dog-sledge. Pike, in his book about his

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travels there, quoted an Indian's question to a missionary, who had been trying to get the native to understand the attractions of Heaven: "And is it like the land of the musk-ox in summer, when the mist is on the lakes, and the loon cries very often?" But one flies there now, and thus its enchantment fades. Its light dims; or for me at least the colours of its aurora borealis are not what they were.

And, now we have mentioned the aeroplane, even while this anthology was being garnered a flight from London to Cape Town was made in less than four days. Yet that extraordinary feat roused but little excitement, and the adventurer himself, though he spoke of his machine, hardly mentioned Africa. Perhaps he gave Africa no thought, being superior to it, except as a distant guide for his controls. How different was the day when Stanley's *Through the Dark Continent* was published! That caused enough excitement. Africa then was really dark, and he had traversed it by taking one step after another. This occupied more than four days; and as for Africa, he was forced to know the full flavour of it. His book is almost forgotten now—nobody, as far as I know, ever called it a good book of travel—but on the day of its publication the brown stacks of it at Mudie's were besieged. I could not get near it for a week.

No book of travel will ever again rouse that interest. Though Dr. Beebe of New York should go down in his windowed steel globe to the very oceanic ooze, and spy legions of sea-serpents, we should be unmoved. Our wonder has gone. The day of triumph has arrived; the curiosity of man

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has conquered the wild. Earth, we are told, has no more occult places. Men in a machine have soared over Everest. Even the secret ravines of Prester John's kingdom have been bombed and gassed. What more is there for us to do? It was in the year 1900, or thereabouts, that the explosive engine began to expedite the exploration of the world, and brought the long task to a speedy close; and this little anthology of mine is confined to the writers of so revolutionary a century. We have, in about a third of it, gone farther from Richard Hakluyt than was he from Ptolemy.

Richard Hakluyt tells us that, when a scholar of Westminster, "that fruitful nursery," he had a half-holiday to spend, and visited his cousin, a Gentleman of the Middle Temple. At that time, some years were to go before Drake would begin his circumnavigation. Richard, at his cousin's place, found "lying open upon his board certaine bookes of Cosmographie, with an universall Mappe." He confessed to curiosity, and thereupon his cousin instructed his ignorance, and pointed with a wand "to all the knowen Seas, Gulfs, Bayes, Straights, Capes, Rivers, Empires, Kingdomes, Dukedomes, and Territories of ech part . . ." and advised the Westminster boy of much else, in particular directing attention to the 107th Psalm. It was then that young Richard resolved to "prosecute that knowledge and kind of literature, the doores whereof (after a sort) were so happily opened before me."

That visit, in fact, settled for him the joyous work of his life, the *English Voyages*. The year of his resolve to testify to the work of English

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navigators was not much more than half a century after the Cape of Good Hope had been rounded, opening a new way to the Far East ; and the discovery of America. We see now that more than the writing of a history of travel was prompted that afternoon ; the building of an empire was about to begin. Hakluyt foresaw that, and fervently desired it. He well understood his enterprising and energetic countrymen. " It can not be denied," he says, " but as in all former ages, they have been men full of activity, stirrers abroad, and searchers of the remote parts of the world." In his day very certainly they were all that, and more. In due season the Spanish Armada was scattered. Later still, after coasts had been claimed and colonies settled everywhere, there was the invention of the steam-engine and various navigational instruments, each of which contributed to the discovery and the charting of obscure seas and lands ; and with them came also the Industrial Revolution and its commercial travellers, the force of which is still far from spent.

Here we are, after an advance so bewilderingly rapid in this century that Darwin, Livingstone, Bates, Wallace, Bruce, though only Victorians, are but names to this generation. Bates gave so many years to the Amazon that it was easier for him to speak Portuguese than English when he came home. Men were more leisurely then, when on their travels. They did not fly, but we ought to admit that they did get to understand their subjects—it took some time—and left records so worthy that some of their books are not yet displaced by an improved prose. You will see herein,

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and without a strict examination, that we differ now not only from Hakluyt's vigorous speech on its simple physical plane, but from the standard established for us in the next century, our classical English prose, though it is said to be archaic now like the English Bible of 1611 which is set to its measure. I should like to know what Hakluyt, who rejoiced in the direct statements of seamen, could make of the following passage, which is from a journey in the clouds by Mr. Beirne Lay, published in a recent *Harper's Magazine*.

"The mechanic yanks the chocks out and I press the fat of my hand against the knob-headed throttle. The propeller bites into the air and starts the P-6 rolling across the concrete ramp. It trundles along evenly on its rubber tires and tailwheel until it reaches the edge of the field. The rough spots jar me up and down in my seat. The ship is out of its element. It waddles along like a clumsy duck, wings wabbling back and forth. I can't see very well with all that nose up in front, so I weave slightly and crane my neck to peek outside the windshield and along the sides of the fuselage, looking out for bad places or other ships. Hold it, you goof!"

That passage certainly shows we have something to say which is known only in this age. Yet if we look at it again we see it is not so far from Hakluyt as at first we supposed. A helmsman, when his barque was driving with more canvas than he enjoyed while the seas following his ship were ominous, might have expressed a similar sensation though in other terms. It concerns only the senses. I suppose a palæolithic hunter, after he had dared to let fly at a mammoth, but was not sure the monster was finished, felt the same apprehension, and afterwards explained the in-

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cident just as dramatically by the fire in his cave. Prose is good which gives no more than that vivacity ; and perhaps that is the most we should expect from a narrative of travel ; it is enough to prompt us to make the journey with the writer.

The truth is, steamships, aeroplanes, wireless, all the machines which have so changed our ways of life, have changed us but little. They have altered the look of the world, and much more than we like, and brought places within reach which were all but inaccessible. We hear each other speak across intervening continents and oceans ; but usually we do not hear news of greater importance from ten thousand miles away than we could get across a garden fence. We have at last laid bare the mystery of earth's superficies, and now that is done we have come to the beginning, much to our surprise, of a far greater task.

We have surveyed all the earth ; and now, what are we going to do with it ? Young people, who regret that the description *Unknown* has disappeared from maps, and that exploration is done, should know they may now begin, and the sooner the better, on a far more difficult journey than faced Drake when he set out from Plymouth on his circumnavigation. We have ended the rough pioneering work on the earth. It is necessary to discover now the best use to make of it. That means an exploration of the mind ; and it will be long before we reach Ultima Thule there. What possibilities are involved in that voyage of discovery are fairly clear from the debates and confusions which at present afflict humanity. This problem will require from those who may undertake it at least as much fidelity to a noble purpose,

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the courage to hold on when the horizon is hopeless, and quite definitely far more exact knowledge, than Columbus took with him when he boarded the *Santa Maria* at Palos. The physical plane alone will give no sure support any more. The materialistic basis will serve only as a starting point. And without doubt our language will be extended to a new capacity and potency.

We begin anew. That should give vivacity at least to our prose of travel. But it will give more than that. Some indication of the possibilities show, I hope, here and there, in the following pages. All of it is from writers of this century. All is modern. It begins, in the first extract, at Euston, and in a way which certainly suggests there is something in our own familiar streets that is challenging and mysterious, and even sinister to a mind becoming aware of hidden latencies. Then we see Egdon Heath, the prospect of our original nurture, in prose as stately, yet with meanings between the lines, as any we have had since Shakespeare was busy.

There is no system in this anthology, except that it begins at home, crosses to Europe, and then proceeds eastward round the world till it is back in its own place again. It is partial; that was in its nature; some writers are not in it who should have been. But its brief glimpses of the world as it is are enough, maybe, to show that exploration has only begun, and that our equipment for what lies ahead of us must be of a nature that was not in Hakluyt's dreams.

H. M. TOMLINSON.

## JAMES BONE

### North o' Euston

IN modern life the great railway stations are the City gates. Here are gathered much of the sadness and misery, the joy and fulfilment of existence, the suspense and hopes and hates and loves that the eye confesses at last as the train steams out or in. Strangers from afar are welcomed face to face ; men on adventurous errands go out as through sally-ports (what a sally-port to eternity was Victoria Station from 1914 to 1918 ! ) ; the handkerchief waves for an instant, but that is the only pennon, and we do not see them grow to pigmies as they troop over the plain. At these gates of the modern city people arrive and depart at full stature. The Great arrive in their noiseless trains ; a carriage door opens and there, large as life, stands a king or the head of a Republic ; the band plays its eight bars of music while the Great shake hands with the Great and the military guard stiffens for inspection. Five minutes later and it is all over and the station is on the move again and ordinary passengers are swarming into their trains. It is all so sudden, so life-size, so soon over that it seems as unreal as the white-



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painted coal on the tender of the State train. And to the sensitive onlooker this air of unreality touches all the station happenings : the meetings looked forward to so eagerly by flaming hearts, the farewells of the old with the young, the last words said. In a few minutes the platform is empty but for a few porters and old ladies asking about trains. If the scenes of strong human emotions were really haunted by the shades of the actors, what dense assemblies there would be on every railway platform !

Some emanation of the tragic, or at least of the sinister side of the drama of coming and going, hangs about the neighbourhood of the great railway termini. It is potently present round Waterloo with its shabby confusion of railway arches and rows of dark little houses lying in ambush in its intricacies, its second-rate music-hall rendezvous, and a peculiar South London blight near the river suggesting wharfland. It is present in a particularly romantic form at Fenchurch Street Station—in a shop at the corner you can buy *Malay Self-Taught*—that half-secret station tucked away from any thoroughfare, with a little lagoon of a yard before its dingy front, where some days no cab can penetrate because of the bodies of shivering lascars waiting silently with their belongings for the order to mount the stairs and take train to their ships at Tilbury. Fenchurch Street Station's dark roof resounds less than it did to the final bitternesses of sailors and their women, but there are still more voices raised in anger here than in other London stations. At night, when the City shops are shuttered and the streets deserted, this station sometimes

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splutters with life and song and oaths and sailor men's cries. But the emanation thickens to a cloud in the region behind the three great termini in Euston Road, that may be called, for convenience' sake, North o' Euston.

King's Cross lurks within a sort of stableyard, its campanile with the clock, too, having a domestic look, like the feature of a stable of a great house. It seems the right place for the Flying Scotsman to bear away in reserved compartments carefully selected people on the 11th of August. St. Pancras is like a cathedral to an unknown saint—called St. Pancras for the moment—raising the whole skyline of the north with Gothic outlines and its nobly spanned interior, whose great height reduces trains and people to something like performing mice in a cage. But best of all as a work of imagination is Euston, with its tremendous granite Doric portal, by which Hardwick recognized Euston as London's Gate. How the lights of London sparkled in the old days as one drove through it in one's first London hansom! How its shadow fell as one drove back! What a setting was the gigantic portal to the dreams of young men who had come to London to seek their fortune!

But the region round Euston does not suggest the young man seeking his fortune at all. All great railway stations surround themselves with a sort of debatable land that is neither residential, commercial, industrial, trading, nor theatrical. It has shabby hotels and makeshift lodgings, bawdy houses, pawnbroker's shops, second-hand dealers in all sorts of articles from muddy mock-ermine furs to rings of rusty keys. A strange

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temporary look hangs about the place as though the denizens were always packing up, many of them moving on, and moving on too quickly to pack up, and the place was organized for immediate disposal of their goods. The only touch of new paint is where a new pseudonym has been lettered on the front of a shabby hotel. A strange sort of conflict seems to be waging all the time up and down these streets with routs and forays as though London was defending itself against these adventurers and trying to drive them back into the stations and away, and the needy folk were making a last stand.

Another fancy one has in North o' Euston is of strangers who sought London not as a land to conquer but as an asylum. Police reports show that every year a large number of the petty criminals, fraudulent tradesmen, shopmen who have falsified books, and clerks who have embezzled, and all sorts of criminals through weakness flee to London to escape justice, and many who have taken their punishment to escape further shame. Do many of them when they come out of their station and see the rush and turmoil and spacious, incoherent metropolitanism of Euston Road recoil abashed, settle down in the hinterland of the stations, marry and breed furtive little children in these furtive streets? Doubtless the people North o' Euston are as honest as people elsewhere, but that is the effect of much observation and cogitation there. It is a queer region, with a population that moves much at night, and its streets of two-storey houses with forlorn gardens with broken iron railings, and secret-looking tiny squares and courts entered through archways containing a hamlet

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with higgledy-piggledy tiny gardens with washings hung out to dry, and oversized public-houses. Even the dead do not belong to the district, but came there by chance, for the obscure graveyard of St. James's that is so hard to find is packed with bodies that were carted up half a century ago from St. James's Churchyard, Piccadilly, when their lairs were wanted for a new restaurant. Their tombstones, incommoded and alien, are ranged round the walls, depreciating this unfashionable site for Piccadilly tombstones. I wonder if any of the broken men of the region who eat their luncheons here in the summer have a fellow-feeling for these tombstones. "Gentleman" is the description cut on many.

The most furtive, and in its way the most sinister spirit of the region, resides, I think, in a dingy crescent with a shallow convex curve and a distant echo of gentility in its arched windows and faint glimmer that tells of stucco beneath its grime. Its small houses are divided and subdivided among many tenants, but it is curiously quiet at night, with naked lights here and there behind curtainless windows. It is an uncanny experience to strike this crescent in a winter's dawn when killing time waiting on an overdue train at the station. I remember well striking the place on one such aimless itinerary. The crescent seemed to curve endlessly on and on in its shabby symmetry, each number looking more mysterious and sinister than the last with the dawn and the gaslight discovering its discoloured face. Suddenly behind me I heard shambling footsteps. I looked back, but by the curve of the crescent could see no one, and as I went on with the steps

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of the unseen figure getting closer and closer, it was like an ugly dream that would never end. In this mood, with the mind seeking for something tangible to give substance to my obsession of the night, my thoughts fastened on a gigantic demi-jar over the fascia of a shabby shop that had once been a drysalter's. It seemed a symbol of the mystery and abominable menace one sensed in the locality as though the genie of the region waited on the appointed day to be unsealed and discharge his malignity against the honour of the City. In the morning I had forgotten it all, but the vision came back again this summer when the inquest was held on the body of a famous man of learning full of years and honours, who, arriving in London one night for a family wedding, dined at a railway hotel, strolled out for an hour into these streets and met shame and death ; a great light in the world of knowledge went out in guttering smoke. It was this and other disasters to honour rather than the Camden Town Murder with its relation to the railway stations and the night-life around them that seemed to express the measure of dingy horror that lurks in the region.

And what fiction-writer would be bold enough to introduce such an incident as this ?

It might have happened to any one hurrying to work in the dreary Euston morning, but it was a policeman on his rounds who noticed a man's finger with a cheap ring upon it impaled on a spike on the top of a gateway. The relic was taken to Scotland Yard Museum, where the finger-print experts identified it as belonging to a notorious ex-convict. A week later a man was arrested at Elephant and Castle as a pickpocket. He asked

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how he could pick pockets with a hand like that, showing a heavily bandaged hand. At the police office he was found to have lost a finger, and his finger-prints were found to agree with the severed finger.

Modern Art with its perfect instinct for the expressive was bound to come to North o' Euston, and in due course the Cumberland Market School was evoked in which Walter Sickert, from its anxieties, its ennui, its sordid makeshift bed-chambers, its ugly wallpapers and hard brittle-faced public-houses, distilled and decanted an essence that will preserve it all for future generations when all that one connotes as North o' Euston has gone. It is going steadily as the rebuilding goes on ; it will some day be untenable for the discouraged and needy population that camp round the great stations like a rabble round the city gates who have lost the password.

*The London Perambulator.* 1925.

## II

THOMAS HARDY

### Egdon Heath

A SATURDAY afternoon in November was approaching the time of twilight, and the vast tract of unenclosed wild known as Egdon Heath embrowned itself moment by moment. Overhead the hollow stretch of whitish cloud shutting out the sky was as a tent which had the whole heath for its floor.

The heaven being spread with this pallid screen and the earth with the darkest vegetation, their meeting-line at the horizon was clearly marked. In such contrast the heath wore the appearance of an instalment of night which had taken up its place before its astronomical hour was come: darkness had to a great extent arrived hereon, while day stood distinct in the sky. Looking upwards, a furze-cutter would have been inclined to continue work; looking down, he would have decided to finish his fagot and go home. The distant rims of the world and of the firmament seemed to be a division in time no less than a division in matter. The face of the heath by its mere complexion added half an hour to evening; it could in like manner retard the dawn, sadden

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noon, anticipate the frowning of storms scarcely generated, and intensify the opacity of a moonless midnight to a cause of shaking and dread.

In fact, precisely at this transitional point of its nightly roll into darkness the great and particular glory of the Egdon waste began, and nobody could be said to understand the heath who had not been there at such a time. It could best be felt when it could not clearly be seen, its complete effect and explanation lying in this and the succeeding hours before the next dawn : then, and only then, did it tell its true tale. The spot was, indeed, a near relation of night, and when night showed itself an apparent tendency to gravitate together could be perceived in its shades and the scene. The sombre stretch of rounds and hollows seemed to rise and meet the evening gloom in pure sympathy, the heath exhaling darkness as rapidly as the heavens precipitated it: And so the obscurity in the air and the obscurity in the land closed together in a black fraternization towards which each advanced half-way.

The place became full of a watchful intentness now ; for when other things sank brooding to sleep the heath appeared slowly to awake and listen. Every night its Titanic form seemed to await something ; but it had waited thus, unmoved, during so many centuries, through the crises of so many things, that it could only be imagined to await one last crisis—the final overthrow.

It was a spot which returned upon the memory of those who loved it with an aspect of peculiar and kindly congruity. Smiling champignons of flowers and fruit hardly do this, for they are



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permanently harmonious only with an existence of better reputation as to its issues than the present. Twilight combined with the scenery of Egdon Heath to evolve a thing majestic without severity, impressive without showiness, emphatic in its admonitions, grand in its simplicity. The qualifications which frequently invest the façade of a prison with far more dignity than is found in the façade of a palace double its size lent to this heath a sublimity in which spots renowned for beauty of the accepted kind are utterly wanting. Fair prospects wed happily with fair times ; but alas, if times be not fair ! Men have oftener suffered from the mockery of a place too smiling for their reason than from the oppression of surroundings oversadly tinged. Haggard Egdon appealed to a subtler and scarcer instinct, to a more recently learnt emotion, than that which responds to the sort of beauty called charming and fair.

Indeed, it is a question if the exclusive reign of this orthodox beauty is not approaching its last quarter. The new Vale of Tempe may be a gaunt waste in Thule : human souls may find themselves in closer and closer harmony with external things wearing a sombreness distasteful to our race when it was young. The time seems near, if it has not actually arrived, when the chastened sublimity of a moor, a sea, or a mountain will be all of nature that is absolutely in keeping with the moods of the more thinking among mankind. And ultimately, to the commonest tourist, spots like Iceland may become what the vineyards and myrtle-gardens of South Europe are to him now ; and Heidelberg and

## EGDON HEATH

Baden be passed unheeded as he hastens from the Alps to the sand-dunes of Scheveningen.

The most thorough-going ascetic could feel that he had a natural right to wander on Egdon : he was keeping within the line of legitimate indulgence when he laid himself open to influences such as these. Colours and beauties so far subdued were, at least, the birthright of all. Only in summer days of highest feather did its mood touch the level of gaiety. Intensity was more usually reached by way of the solemn than by way of the brilliant, and such a sort of intensity was often arrived at during winter darkness, tempests, and mists. Then Egdon was aroused to reciprocity ; for the storm was its lover, and the wind its friend. Then it became the home of strange phantoms ; and it was found to be the hitherto unrecognized original of those wild regions of obscurity which are vaguely felt to be compassing us about in midnight dreams of flight and disaster, and are never thought of after the dream till revived by scenes like this.

It was at present a place perfectly accordant with man's nature—neither ghastly, hateful, nor ugly ; neither commonplace, unmeaning, nor tame ; but, like man, slighted and enduring ; and withal singularly colossal and mysterious in its swarthy monotony. As with some persons who have long lived apart, solitude seemed to look out of its countenance. It had a lonely face, suggesting tragical possibilities.

This obscure, obsolete, superseded country figures in Domesday. Its condition is recorded therein as that of heathy, furzy, briary wilderness—"Bruaria." Then follows the length and

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breadth in leagues ; and, though some uncertainty exists as to the exact extent of this ancient lineal measure, it appears from the figures that the area of Egdon down to the present day has but little diminished. "Turbaria Bruaria"—the right of cutting heath-turf—occurs in charters relating to the district. "Overgrown with heth and mosse," says Leland of the same dark sweep of country.

Here at least were intelligible facts regarding landscape—far-reaching proofs productive of genuine satisfaction. The untameable, Ishmaelish thing that Egdon now was it always had been. Civilization was its enemy ; and ever since the beginning of vegetation its soil had worn the same antique brown dress, the natural and invariable garment of the particular formation. In its venerable one coat lay a certain vein of satire on human vanity in clothes. A person on a heath in raiment of modern cut and colours has more or less an anomalous look. We seem to want the oldest and simplest human clothing where the clothing of the earth is so primitive.

To recline on a stump of thorn in the central valley of Egdon, between afternoon and night, as now, where the eye could reach nothing of the world outside the summits and shoulders of heathland which filled the whole circumference of its glance, and to know that everything around and underneath had been from prehistoric times as unaltered as the stars overhead, gave ballast to the mind adrift on change, and harassed by the irrepressible New. The great inviolate place had an ancient permanence which the sea cannot claim. Who can say of a particular sea that it is

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old ? Distilled by the sun, kneaded by the moon, it is renewed in a year, in a day, or in an hour. The sea changed, the fields changed, the rivers, the villages, and the people changed, yet Egdon remained. Those surfaces were neither so steep as to be destructible by weather, nor so flat as to be the victims of floods and deposits. With the exception of an aged highway, and a still more aged barrow presently to be referred to—themselves almost crystallized to natural products by long continuance—even the trifling irregularities were not caused by pickaxe, plough, or spade, but remained as the very finger-touches of the last geological change.

The above-mentioned highway traversed the lower levels of the heath from one horizon to another. In many portions of its course it overlaid an old vicinal way, which branched from the great Western road of the Romans, the *Via Iceniana*, or Ikenild Street, hard by. On the evening under consideration it would have been noticed that, though the gloom had increased sufficiently to confuse the minor features of the heath, the white surface of the road remained almost as clear as ever.

*The Return of the Native.* 1878.

### III

## EDMUND BLUNDEN

### In the Bay

My theory of repentance during the first few days at sea was to be fact. At the start, I seemed to myself to be perfectly steady. The breeze blew cold ; I thought it even pleasant ; and without over-exercise I took my last views of English coasts, and watched ships ahead of us blackly smudging a vaporous sky. I attended dinner, and began to swell with vanity.

By this time the ship was rolling (after all yesterday's kind assurances). There was no mistake about it, and my vanity and observation were at once cut short by a surprise attack of seasickness. A dismal cowardice came on me. The wind seemed changing, or perhaps—I inquired but little—the course of the ship ; the effect needed no inquiry. Time and again, lowering my *morale* at each arrival, the seas beat in a great crash upon the ship's sides, and, with the attendant tilt, the scarcely less welcome seethe of the waters flowing down the decks would follow. The ship seemed to be provided with cogs on which she was raised and lowered with horrible deliberate jolts over a half-circle : then again, the big wave

## IN THE BAY

would jump in with a punch like some giant Fitzsimmons. My experience was growing. The sunshine died off the porthole ; the breeze was half a gale already, droning and whining louder and louder ; and I felt that my breaking-in was to be thorough enough.

Captain Hosea found time, now and then, to look at his passenger. We kept up eloquent discourse, though I was handicapped. The origin of species and the riddle of the universe are topics on which much enlivening debate may occur, and certainly did then ; but the floor of the debating society should be made steady and not to lift and lean and recover with a monstrous jerk as a point is being approached. " It's fierce," said he, referring to the idea of infinite abyss. I could agree from the smaller one which I myself seemed to be probing.

Sleep was not easy during these early hours of my holiday. I spent an awkward night or two listening to rattlings of all sorts, the battering-ram shocks of the seas, and the thump of the engines ; watching the sweat on the rivets of my roof roll like the bubble in a spirit-level, and my towel float out to an apparent unperpendicular side to side. In this state of things I easily came to know the features of my cabin, described on the door-key as " spare cabin port." Amidships it was, between the wireless operator's premises and the captain's. The porthole faced the poop and, more immediately, the ship's squat funnel. Beneath the porthole, a padded seat was fixed : and I had on one length of the room a disused radiator, a chest of drawers and a washstand with mirror, where, despite a ventilator above, light rarely seemed to

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come. On the opposite length there were a tall malodorous cupboard and two bunk beds, of which I chose the lower one from sound instinct at the beginning, keeping to it from force of habit afterwards. Such was my dwelling ; but I must not fail to mention the electric light and fan. The place was painted white, but its past use as a store had variegated it.

The steward likewise visited me here, and sympathized. The old fellow talked to me much as if I had known him all my life ; he being known well enough, indeed, to the company for whom he was going to sea in his old age. A scarred nose distinguished him for a time. He complained, with a sort of personal visualization of the sea's boorishness, that while attending to some stores he had been blown off a case into a barrel of flour.

Having therefore spent the best part of my first two days at sea in my cabin, which offered no great variety in itself, I was much pleased to find myself able to arise, manfully, the third day. But I avoided breakfast. The morning looked inviting, the black funnel gleaming even richly in the sun, so presently I took the air. First, I had found some difficulty in shaving, even with a safety razor ; but it was accomplished.

We were still in the Bay of Biscay, and the *Bonadventure* had not done lurching and wallowing. To my naïve eye, the sea was in considerable commotion. Like ever-changing rocky coasts, the horizon rose and fell. As unsteady as that, the day left behind its sunny comfort and brought clouds and chillier air. I saw the navigators passing on their business, but I could not emulate their equipoise ; I attached myself to a rail or

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fixture to watch them, this one coiling a rope, that trailing a coco-nut mat in the sea—a capital cleanser ; to watch the gulls also, so easily keeping up with the plunging bows, amid all their side-shows of wheeling and darting flights. Inured, I presently joined in at dinner in the saloon ; ate, and had no serious trouble. A framework, which was described as a “ fiddle,” covered the table and checked the more mobile crockery ; but it could not prevent an accident in the steward’s own department, which caused his tone of private feud with Neptune to sound clearly in the apostrophe, “ Break ’em all, then, so we shall have none for the fine weather.” But fine weather was expected now.

. *The Bonadventure.* 1922.



## IV

HENRY ADAMS

### The Virgin of Chartres

WE must take ten minutes to accustom our eyes to the light, and we had better use them to seek the reason why we come to Chartres rather than to Rheims or Amiens or Bourges, for the cathedral that fills our ideal. The truth is, there are several reasons ; there generally are, for doing the things we like ; and after you have studied Chartres to the ground, and got your reasons settled, you will never find an antiquarian to agree with you ; the architects will probably listen to you with contempt ; and even these excellent priests, whose kindness is great, whose patience is heavenly, and whose good opinion you would so gladly gain, will turn from you in pain, if not with horror. The Gothic is singular in this ; one seems easily at home in the Renaissance ; one is not too strange in the Byzantine ; as for the Roman, it is ourselves ; and we could walk blindfolded through every chink and cranny of the Greek mind ; all these styles seem modern, when we come close to them ; but the Gothic gets away. No two men think alike about it, and no woman agrees with either man. The

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Church itself never agreed about it, and the architects agree even less than the priests. To most minds it casts too many shadows ; it wraps itself in mystery ; and when people talk of mystery, they commonly mean fear. To others, the Gothic seems hoary with age and decrepitude, and its shadows mean death. What is curious to watch is the fanatical conviction of the Gothic enthusiast, to whom the twelfth century means exuberant youth, the eternal child of Wordsworth, over whom its immortality broods like the day ; it is so simple and yet so complicated ; it seems so much and so little ; it loves so many toys and cares for so few necessities ; its youth is so young, its age so old, and its youthful yearning for old thought is so disconcerting, like the mysterious senility of the baby that :

Deaf and silent, reads the eternal deep,  
Haunted forever by the eternal mind.

One need not take it more seriously than one takes the baby itself. Our amusement is to play with it, and to catch its meaning in its smile ; and whatever Chartres may be now, when young it was a smile. To the Church, no doubt, its cathedral here has a fixed and administrative meaning, which is the same as that of every other bishop's seat and with which we have nothing whatever to do. To us, it is a child's fancy ; a toy-house to please the Queen of Heaven—to please her so much that she would be happy in it—to charm her till she smiled.

The Queen Mother was as majestic as you like ; she was absolute ; she could be stern ; she was not above being angry ; but she was still a

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woman, who loved grace, beauty, ornament—her toilette, robes, jewels ; who considered the arrangement of her palace with attention, and liked both light and colour ; who kept a keen eye on her Court, and exacted prompt and willing obedience from king and archbishops as well as from beggars and drunken priests. She protected her friends and punished her enemies. She required space, beyond which was known in the courts of kings, because she was liable at all times to have ten thousand people begging her for favours—mostly inconsistent with law—and deaf to refusal. She was extremely sensitive to neglect, to disagreeable impressions, to want of intelligence in her surroundings. She was the greatest artist, as she was the greatest philosopher and musician and theologist, that ever lived on earth, except her Son, Who, at Chartres, is still an Infant under her guardianship. Her taste was infallible ; her sentence eternally final. This church was built for her in this spirit of simple-minded, practical, utilitarian faith—in this singleness of thought, exactly as a little girl sets up a doll-house for her favourite blonde doll. Unless you can go back to your dolls, you are out of place here. If you can go back to them, and get rid for one small hour of the weight of custom, you shall see Chartres in glory.

The palaces of earthly queens were hovels compared with these palaces of the Queen of Heaven at Chartres, Paris, Laon, Noyon, Rheims, Amiens, Rouen, Bayeux, Coutances—a list that might be stretched into a volume. The nearest approach we have made to a palace was the Merveille at Mont-Saint-Michel, but no Queen had a

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palace equal to that. The Merveille was built, or designed, about the year 1200; toward the year 1500, Louis XI. built a great castle at Loches in Touraine, and there Queen Anne de Bretagne had apartments which still exist, and which we will visit. At Blois you shall see the residence which served for Catherine de Medicis till her death in 1589. Anne de Bretagne was trebly queen, and Catherine de Medicis took her standard of comfort from the luxury of Florence. At Versailles you can see the apartments which the queens of the Bourbon line occupied through their century of magnificence. All put together, and then trebled in importance, could not rival the splendour of any single cathedral dedicated to Queen Mary in the thirteenth century; and of them all, Chartres was built to be peculiarly and exceptionally her delight.

One has grown so used to this sort of loose comparison, this reckless waste of words, that one no longer adopts an idea unless it is driven in with hammers of statistics and columns of figures. With the irritating demand for literal exactness and perfectly straight lines which lights up every truly American eye, you will certainly ask when this exaltation of Mary began, and unless you get the dates, you will doubt the facts. It is your own fault if they are tiresome; you might easily read them all in the *Iconographie de la Sainte Vierge*, by M. Rohault de Fleury, published in 1878. You can start at Byzantium with the Empress Helena in 326, or with the Council of Ephesus in 431. You will find the Virgin acting as the patron saint of Constantinople and of the Imperial residence, under as many

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names as Artemis or Aphrodite had borne. She was the chief favourite of the Eastern Empire, and her picture was carried at the head of every procession and hung on the wall of every hut and hovel, as it is still wherever the Greek Church goes. In the year 610, when Heraclius sailed from Carthage to dethrone Phocas at Constantinople, his ships carried the image of the Virgin at their mastheads. In 1143, just before the flèche on the Chartres clocher was begun, the Basileus John Comnenus died, and so devoted was he to the Virgin that, on a triumphal entry into Constantinople, he put the image of the Mother of God in his chariot, while he himself walked. In the Western Church the Virgin had always been highly honoured, but it was not until the crusades that she began to overshadow the Trinity itself. Then her miracles became more frequent and her shrines more frequented, so that Chartres, soon after 1100, was rich enough to build its western portal with Byzantine splendour. A proof of the new outburst can be read in the story of Citeaux. For us, Citeaux means Saint Bernard, who joined the Order in 1112, and in 1115 founded his Abbey of Clairvaux in the territory of Troyes. In him, the religious emotion of the half-century between the first and second crusades (1095-1145) centred as in no one else. He was a French precursor of Saint Francis of Assisi who lived a century later. If we were to plunge into the story of Citeaux and Saint Bernard we should never escape, for Saint Bernard incarnates what we are trying to understand, and his mind is further from us than the architecture. You would lose hold of everything actual, if

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you could comprehend in its contradictions the strange mixture of passion and caution, the austerity, the self-abandonment, the vehemence, the restraint, the love, the hate, the miracles, and the scepticism of Saint Bernard. The Cistercian Order, which was founded in 1098, from the first put all its churches under the special protection of the Virgin, and Saint Bernard in his time was regarded as the apple of the Virgin's eye. Tradition as old as the twelfth century, which long afterwards gave to Murillo the subject of a famous painting, told that once, when he was reciting before her statue the "Ave Maria Stella," and came to the words, "Monstra te esse Matrem," the image, pressing its breast, dropped on the lips of her servant three drops of the milk which had nourished the Saviour. The same miracle, in various forms, was told of many other persons, both saints and sinners; but it made so much impression on the mind of the age that, in the fourteenth century, Dante, seeking in Paradise for some official introduction to the foot of the Throne, found no intercessor with the Queen of Heaven more potent than Saint Bernard. You can still read Bernard's hymns to the Virgin, and even his sermons, if you like. To him she was the great mediator. In the eyes of a culpable humanity, Christ was too sublime, too terrible, too just, but not even the weakest human frailty could fear to approach his Mother. Her attribute was humility; her love and pity were infinite. "Let him deny your mercy who can say that he has ever asked it in vain."

*Mont-Saint-Michel and Chartres.* 1919.

## V

V. M. YEATES

### Clouds over France, 1918

HAVING finished his pipe, Tom strolled up to the hangars. The fruit trees were just beginning to show awareness of the possibility that even in 1918 there would be spring. The orchard would look very pretty in another six weeks, and he hoped he would still be there to see nature's annual tricking out for the pageant of summer. It was soothing to behold the complete indifference of the rest of natural things and processes to the tumults and thuddings and trumpeting of men ; a devastating comment or no-comment upon the church-and-press war clamour. And men returned the same frankly by being blindly indifferent to everything except the system erected to meet their passioned interests of the moment.

The squadron occupied for its officers' mess one side of a square farm building which enclosed a yard full of animals and dung. It was quite picturesque, the low stone façade roofed above with old red-brown tiles. There was a plain doorway in the centre, and on each side two windows, giving light to the dining-room and the ante-room. They were comfortable quarters.

There was a huge fireplace in each room and a supply of toasting forks. Of course there was a bar, and it was usually well stocked.

In the barns which formed two sides of the courtyard there were kept three ridable horses that had got used to the row of the aeroplanes, and would trot about the countryside. Tom, who had no sort of seat, was out on one of these beasts one afternoon, and some silly ass, flying low overhead, let off his machine guns, attacking the target at a ridiculous angle that would send bullets ricochetting all over France. The nag could not put up with it, and bolted for home. Tom hung on, expecting each heavenward lurch to end the partnership, seeing himself with one foot caught in the stirrup having his brains bashed out on the ground. But somehow he was still in the saddle when the horse stopped with a jerk in front of his stable door. He could not but admire the animal's sound instinct in bolting for home on hearing machine-gun fire, but decided he would keep to safer than equestrian amusements; flying, for instance.

The pigs were indistinguishable from English pigs, except for a greater pungency of odour, which was not their own fault. The cows, however, were less ladylike than English cows. Tom missed that air of placid and spinsterish chastity that make English cows and women so irritating to bulls and men. The chickens, too, had not been hatched in the protestant tradition, and lacked moral grandeur. Nevertheless farming seemed to pay in France.

Having read the first hundred and twenty-four pages of *La Terre*, Tom thought he knew some-



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thing about French peasants, and was always hoping to catch some glimpses of delightful Zolaesque sordidness. So far he had failed. They seemed quiet, hard-working, orderly, polite. On week-days they worked from dawn till dusk, the women in the fields with what men there were. Unlike Gray's friends they did not drive their team afield jocund, but wrapped in impassable blankness. No tricks of aviation could amaze them. Even a near whizz of bullets left them unmoved as they worked within a hundred yards of the ground target. At the most they gazed with monumental stolidity ; so they would gaze at an angel sounding the trump of doom on a week-day. Their massive continental plough-horses were very like them.

Y looked all right. They pulled her out and ran the engine. The guns were ready for loading, and when Tom pulled up the CC gear handle it stopped up. There was a little sideways play on the stick to be taken up. The seat was comfortable, the timepiece functioned, the engine gave its revs. Tom dressed and took it up. The sky had clouded over and there was quite a wind blowing from west of south-west. At ten thousand feet there would be a strong west wind ; the sort that took one over Cambrai in a few seconds and made the return journey seem like half an hour, with Archie taking full advantage of one's difficulties and turning the sky black. It probably cost about five hundred thousand pounds for Archie to bring down a two-thousand-pound aeroplane ; but that did not matter ; it was *das Krieg*.

It climbed well, and in a minute reached the cloud layer, which was at fifteen hundred feet.

After a few preliminary obscurings he was involved in the grey deleting mist. The world had gone ; dissolved into intangible chaos. Nothing had form except the aeroplane and himself and perhaps that queer circular ghost of a rainbow that sat in the blankness in front. Every motion had ceased, for all the roaring of the engine. Nevertheless, he knew by experience that in this no-world it was necessary to keep the pitot at eighty or more, and the joystick and rudder central, or bad sensations as of dizzy flopping would follow. The mist grew darker. He put his head in the office and flew by the instruments. He kept the speed right, but he could feel that all was not well, without being able to tell what might be wrong. The mist brightened. He came suddenly into sunshine. A cloudless blue vault of sky arched over a gleaming floor of ivory rocks. It was all around him in the twinkling of an eye, and the grey chaos away in another universe, a million light years or a few feet distant. The two spheres were as close together and as far apart as life and death. He saw that he was flying with unintentional bank.

The bright glare of uncontaminated space and the cold purity of the air had their usual exhilarating effect. He performed several rolls and contorted in nameless rudder-kicking spasms that spun the sky and cloud-floor jerkily about ; and, satisfied that Y was not likely to fall to pieces, he dropped to the floor and contour-chased over its shining hillocks and among its celestial ravines. This was not the majesty of cumulus, with its immitigable towering heights and golden threatening ; its soul of fire and shadow ; pile on pile of

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magically suspended gleaming dream-stuff ; glory of vision and splendour of reality ; shapeless splendour of form ; empty solidity ; fantastic, mutable, illusory as life itself. This was the level-floating rain-cloud, a layer only a few hundred feet thick, that makes the earth so dull a place when it eclipses the sky, and concentrating all dullness there, leaves the region above it stainless, and very like conventional heaven. On those refulgent rocks should angels sit ; like them insubstantial, glowing like them. Music should they make with golden wires, unheard ; hymning the evident godhead of the sun, from whom the radiance flowed of those immaculable spaces : wings faintly shimmering with faint changing colour, and unbeholding eyes. In that passionless bright void joy abode, interfused among cold atoms of the air. Breath there was keen delight, all earthly grossness purged.

He raced over the craggy plain, now dropping into glens, now zooming up slopes, leaping over ridges, wheeling round tors. Sometimes he could not avoid a sudden escarpment, and hurtled against the solid-seeming wall that menaced him with destruction : he would hit it with a shockless crash that expunged the wide universe ; but in a flash it was re-created after a second of engulfing greyness. And when he had played long enough in the skiey gardens, he would land on a suitable cloud. He throttled down and glided into the wind along the cloud surface, pulling the stick back to hold off and get his tail down. He settled down on the surface that looked solid enough to support him, but it engulfed him as he stalled, and the nose dropped with a lurch into the darkness

## CLOUDS OVER FRANCE, 1918

and almost at once he was looking at the collied world of fields and trees and roads. It was like a bowl coming up round him. He pulled out of the dive and looked about in the dimness to discover where he was. He recognized a railway and the railhead of Achiet-le-Grand. He headed north-west.

The disadvantage of coming out of the clouds in a vertical dive was that there might be some one flying just below one's point of emergence, and in that case disaster would be complete. The chance was nearly infinitesimal perhaps, but Tom thought his life too precious to be subjected to blind risks. He had been exhilarated beyond his usual caution. If he must land on clouds, he would have to pull out of the stall dive at once, and come gently and circumspectly into the real world.

*Winged Victory.* 1934.

## VI

R. B. CUNNINGHAME GRAHAM

### Aurora la Cujíñi

ON one side of the stage sat the musicians, two at the guitar, and two playing small instruments known as "bandurrias," a cross between a mandolin and a guitar. The women suddenly began to clap their hands in a strange rhythm, monotonous at first, but which at length, like the beating of a tom-tom, makes the blood boil, quiets the audience, stills the conversation, and focuses all eyes upon the stage. Then one breaks out into a harsh wild song, the interval so strange, the time so wavering, and so mixed up the rhythm, that at first it scarcely seems more pleasing than the howling of a wolf, but bit by bit goes to the soul, stirs up the middle marrow of the bones, and leaves all other music ever afterwards tame and unpalatable.

The singing terminates abruptly, as it seems, for no set reason, and dies away in a prolonged high shake, and then a girl stands up, encouraged by her fellows with shouts of "Venga Juana," "Vaya querida," and a cross fire of hats thrown on the stage, and interjections from the audience of "preciosita," "retrechera," and the inspiring

## AURORA LA CUJIÑI

clap of hands, which never ceases till the dancer, exhausted, sinks into a chair. Amongst the audience, drinking their manzanilla in little tumblers about the thickness of a piece of sugarcane, eating their "boquerones," ground nuts, and salted olives, the fire of criticism never stops, as every one in Seville of the lower classes is a keen critic both of dancing-girls and bulls.

Of the elder men, a gipsy, though shouting out "salero" in a perfunctory manner, seemed discontented, and recalled the prowess of a gipsy long since dead, by name Aurora, surnamed La Cujíñi, and gave it as his faith that since her time no girl had ever mastered all the mysteries of the dance. The Caloró, who always muster strong at the "Burero," were on his side, and seemed inclined to enforce their arguments with their shears, which, as most of them maintain themselves by clipping mules, they always carry in their sash.

But just as the discussion seemed about to end in a free fight, a girl stepped out to dance. None had remarked her sitting quietly beside the rest; still, she was slightly different in appearance from them all. A gipsy at first sight, with the full lustrous eyes her people brought from Multan, dressed in a somewhat older fashion than the others, her hair brought low upon her forehead and straying on her shoulders in the style of 1840, her skirt much flounced, low shoes tied round the ankles, a Chinese shawl across her shoulders, and a look about her, as she walked into the middle of the stage, as of a mare about to kick. A whisper to the first guitar causes him with a smile to break into the Olé, his instrument well "requin-

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tado," and his fingers flying across the cords as the old Moorish melody jarred and jingled out. She stands a moment motionless, her eyes distending slowly and focusing the attention of the audience on her, and then a sort of shiver seems to run over her, the feet begin to gently scrape along the floor, her naked arms move slowly, with her fingers curiously bent and meant perhaps to indicate by their position the symbols of the oldest of religions, and, as the gipsies say, she draws the hearts of every onlooker into her net. She twists her hips till they seem ready to disjoint, wriggles in a snake-like fashion, drags her skirt upon the stage, draws herself up to her full height, bends double, thrusts all her body forward, her hands move faster, and the short sleeves slip back, exhibiting black tufts of hair under her arms, glued to her skin with sweat. Then she slides forwards, backwards, looks at the audience with defiance, takes a man's hat from off the stage, places it on her head, puts both her arms akimbo, sways to and fro, but still keeps writhing as if her veins were full of quicksilver. Little by little the frenzy dies away, her eyes grow dimmer, and the movements of the body slower, and with a final stamp, and a hoarse guttural cry, she stands a moment quiet, as it is called "dormida," that is, asleep, looking a very statue of impudicity. The audience remained a moment spellbound, with open mouths like Satyrs, and in the box where sat the foreign ladies, one has turned pale and rests her head upon the other's shoulder, who holds her round the waist. Then with a mighty shout the applause breaks forth, hats rain upon the stage, "vivas" and "vayas" rend the air,

## AURORA LA CUJIÑI

and the old gipsy bounds upon a table with a shout, "One God, one Cujíñi." But in the tumult La Cujíñi had disappeared, gone from the eyes of Caloró and of Busné, Gipsy and Gentile, and none saw her more.

Perhaps at witches' sabbaths she still dances, or perhaps in that strange Limbo where the souls of gipsies and their donkeys dree their weird, she writhes and dislocates herself in the Romalis.

Sometimes the curious may see her still dancing before a Venta, in the woolly outline of a Spanish lithograph, her head thrown back, her hair *au catagon*, with one foot pointing to a hat to show her power over, and her contempt for, all the sons of men, just as she did upon that evening when she took a brief and fleeting reincarnation to breathe once more the air of Seville, heavy with perfume of spring flowers mixed with the scent of blood.

*Charity.* 1912.



## VII

ERNEST HEMINGWAY

### The Bull Ring

THE bullfight is not a sport in the Anglo-Saxon sense of the word, that is, it is not an equal contest, or an attempt at an equal contest, between a bull and a man. Rather it is a tragedy ; the death of the bull, which is played, more or less well, by the bull and the man involved, and in which there is danger for the man, but certain death for the animal. This danger to the man can be increased by the bullfighter at will in the measure in which he works close to the bull's horns. Keeping within the rules for bullfighting on foot in a closed ring formulated by years of experience, which, if known and followed, permit a man to perform certain actions with a bull without being caught by the bull's horns, the bullfighter may, by decreasing his distance from the bull's horns, depend more and more on his own reflexes and judgment of that distance to protect him from the points. This danger of goring, which the man certainly creates voluntarily, can be changed to certainty of being caught and tossed by the bull if the man, through ignorance, slowness, torpidness, blind folly or momentary grogginess, breaks any of

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these fundamental rules for the execution of the different suertes. Everything that is done by the man in the ring is called a "suerte." It is the easiest term to use, as it is short. It means act, but the word act has, in English, a connotation of the theatre that makes its use confusing.

People seeing their first bullfight say, "But the bulls are so stupid. They always go for the cape and not for the man."

The bull only goes for the percale of the cape, or for the scarlet serge of the muleta if the man makes him, and so handles the cloth that the bull sees it rather than the man. Therefore to really start to see bullfights a spectator should go to the novilladas or apprentice fights. There the bulls do not always go for the cloth because the bullfighters are learning before your eyes the rules of bullfighting, and they do not always remember or know the proper terrain to take and how to keep the bull after the lure and away from the man. It is one thing to know the rules in principle and another to remember them as they are needed when facing an animal that is seeking to kill you, and the spectator who wants to see men tossed and gored rather than judge the manner in which the bulls are dominated should go to a novillada before he sees a corrido de toros or complete bullfight. It should be a good thing for him to see a novillada first anyway if he wants to learn about technique, since the employment of knowledge that we call by that bastard name is always most visible in its imperfection. At a novillada the spectator may see the mistakes of the bullfighters, and the penalties that these mistakes carry. He will learn something too about the

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state of training or lack of training of the men and the effect this has on their courage.

One time in Madrid I remember we went to a novillada in the middle of the summer on a very hot Sunday, when every one who could afford it had left the city for the beaches of the north or the mountains, and the bullfight was not advertised to start until six o'clock in the evening, to see six Tovar bulls killed by three aspirant matadors, who have all since failed in their profession. We sat in the first row behind the wooden barrier, and when the first bull came out it was clear that Domingo Hernandorena, a short, thick-ankled, graceless Basque with a pale face who looked nervous and incompletely fed, in a cheap rented suit, if he was to kill this bull would either make a fool of himself or be gored. Hernandorena could not control the nervousness of his feet. He wanted to stand quietly and play the bull with the cape with a slow movement of his arms, but when he tried to stand still as the bull charged his feet jumped away in short, nervous jerks. His feet were obviously not under his personal control, and his effort to be statuesque, while his feet jittered him away out of danger, was very funny to the crowd. It was funny to them, because many of them knew that was how their own feet would behave if they saw the horns coming toward them, and as always, they resented any one else being in there in the ring, making money, who had the same physical defects which barred them, the spectators, from that supposedly highly paid way of making a living. In their turn the other two matadors were very fancy with the cape, and Hernandorena's nervous

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jerking was even worse after their performance. He had not been in the ring with a bull for over a year, and he was altogether unable to control his nervousness. When the banderillas were in and it was time for him to go out with the red cloth and the sword to prepare the bull for killing and to kill, the crowd which had applauded ironically at every nervous move he had made knew something very funny would happen. Below us, as he took the muleta and the sword and rinsed his mouth out with water, I could see the muscles of his cheeks twitching. The bull stood against the barrier watching him. Hernandorena could not trust his legs to carry him slowly towards the bull. He knew there was only one way he could stay in one place in the ring. He ran out toward the bull, and ten yards in front of him dropped on both knees on the sand. In that position he was safe from ridicule. He spread the red cloth with his sword and jerked himself forward on his knees toward the bull. The bull was watching the man and the triangle of red cloth, his ears pointed, his eyes fixed, and Hernandorena knee-ed himself a yard closer and shook the cloth. The bull's tail rose, his head lowered, and he charged, and, as he reached the man, Hernandorena rose solidly from his knees into the air, swung over like a bundle, his legs in all directions now, and then dropped to the ground. The bull looked for him, found a wide-spread moving cape held by another bullfighter instead, charged it, and Hernandorena stood up, with sand on his white face, and looked for his sword and the cloth. As he stood up I saw the heavy, soiled grey silk of his rented trousers open

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cleanly and deeply to show the thigh bone from the hip almost to the knee. He saw it too and looked very surprised, and put his hand on it while people jumped over the barrier and ran toward him to carry him to the infirmary. The technical error that he had committed was in not keeping the red cloth of the muleta between himself and the bull until the charge ; then at the moment of jurisdiction as it is called, when the bull's lowered head reaches the cloth, swaying back while he held the cloth, spread by the stick and the sword, far enough forward so that the bull following it would be clear of his body. It was a simple technical error.

That night at the café I heard no word of sympathy for him. He was ignorant, he was torpid, and he was out of training. Why did he insist on being a bullfighter ? Why did he go down on both knees ? Because he was a coward, they said. The knees are for cowards. If he was a coward why did he insist on being a bullfighter ? There was no natural sympathy for uncontrollable nervousness, because he was a paid public performer. It was preferable that he be gored rather than run from the bull. To be gored was honourable ; they would have sympathized with him had he been caught in one of his nervous uncontrollable jerky retreats, which, although they mocked, they knew were from lack of training, rather than for him to have gone down on his knees. Because the hardest thing when frightened by the bull is to control the feet and let the bull come, and any attempt to control the feet was honourable, even though they jeered at it because it looked ridiculous. But when he went on both

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knees, without the technique to fight from that position ; the technique that Marcial Lalanda, the most scientific of living bullfighters, has, and which alone makes that position honourable ; then Hernandorena admitted his nervousness. To show his nervousness was not shameful ; only to admit it. When, lacking the technique and thereby admitting his inability to control his feet, the matador went down on both knees before the bull, the crowd had no more sympathy with him than with a suicide.

For myself, not being a bullfighter, and being much interested in suicides, the problem was one of depiction, and waking in the night I tried to remember what it was that seemed just out of my remembering, and that was the thing that I had really seen, and, finally, remembering all around it, I got it. When he stood up, his face white and dirty and the silk of his breeches opened from waist to knee, it was the dirtiness of the rented breeches, the dirtiness of his slit underwear and the clean, clean, unbearably clean whiteness of the thigh bone that I had seen, and it was that which was important.

*Death in the Afternoon.* 1932.

## VIII

JULIUS MEIER-GRAEFE

(Translated by J. Holroyd-Reece. 1926)

### Spanish Dancers

*Granada, 28th May.*

MY DEAR COUNT,—You instructed me when I took my leave of you to bring you back something from Spain. Do you still remember our conversation in Paris in, I think, 1899, when we met at a performance of Spanish dancers? Good Heavens! how many years ago that was. Poor old Lautrec was with us too, and went quite mad about the contortions of these wild fellows, and I still possess the tablecloth which he covered with his funny drawings after we had finished a charming supper party.

You then expressed the view that in the country itself there must be far finer types of Spanish dancers. In Seville and its surroundings I looked for them in vain, and I believe that the people whom we saw together must have been very rare specimens. People dance everywhere here in the South and very nicely too; it is in their blood like painting is in the blood of the French or playing "Skat" is a talent of the Germans. People dance here better than elsewhere, but this ethnographical peculiarity cannot offer any advantages to a

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*gourmet* like yourself. There is a big difference between the agreeable quality of this average and the artistic performance which can satisfy our demands for concentrated gestures such as we wish to see. The Oteros are as rare here as the Duses are in Italy. I do not even know whether they are made into dancers here, though it is certain that this is their birthplace. The precise opposite from what applies to champagne bottled in Germany is true of them. The individual quality of a Tortajada or an Otero develops probably only on the stages of the European capitals. There are no doubt several Oteros in Spain, but they are descendents of our, not of Spanish beauty, to which I know you too have been faithful through the course of years. In other words, they are insignificant, provincial imitations. Everything which until now we have seen in Spain of this kind has been provincial.

Here, where I think of you often, because there is hardly a place where I could enjoy better thinking of you, I am on the point of being persuaded of a different conclusion. Here, a fairy tale of a measure of perfection is realized which those of us who travel so intensively find it difficult to believe in. That this experience should fall to our lot precisely in Granada contributes not a little to strengthen my assumption that here is the paradise of Spain. Among the gipsies of Granada the genius for the dance runs riot, not talent, but genius; I know that this statement will strike you as just as improbable as if I told you that the Alhambra was surrounded by a valley of gold and jewels. But, since you have, from time to time, given me proofs of your con-



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fidence, I venture to hope that you will hear me with patience. What undoubtedly has helped this tribe is their existence within another people, a process which has given a special discipline to the well-known gipsy tendency towards everything that is rhythmical. The gipsies of Granada have inhabited the picturesque caves of a mountain on the outskirts of the town for several centuries, and they have little in common with the itinerant people to be found in our regions, and they do not even understand their language, though they share some of their habits. Among themselves they speak Spanish, and occasionally a kind of slang which is, I believe, a corruption of the Andalusian dialect. Their blood is mingled considerably with that of Spain, so much so that the Mongolian cut of their faces has been reduced to the smallest minimum ; nevertheless, one distinguishes them immediately from the Spaniards and recognizes a superior species in them. Their expression is far more differentiated. The children, even if they are clothed in rags, look beside Spanish children like princes and princesses. It is impossible to describe to you the delicacy of their movements. This gracefulness may be due to their freedom from physical work, and I have here almost been driven to the conclusion that begging is an ennobling profession.

These dancing gipsies belong to a group under the leadership of their Capitano, Pepe Amaya, who danced in 1900 with a number of his tribe at the Paris Exhibition. Since you hardly ever miss anything you may have been more fortunate than I was in having seen them there. On the other hand, in view of our mutual interest in the dance

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I fancy you would have told me about it. Since then, my dear Count, even your interest in dancing will have waned. During the last years I had almost come to believe, when I found myself unable to be enthusiastic about the stars which somewhat indiscriminating Berlin had chosen for its idols, that it was due to my years which in so far as I have spent them in Berlin must be counted twice over, and I have caught you, my dear Sassen, occasionally in the act of coming to the same conclusion. Take comfort, my friend ! Even dancing, although it does not belong to the highest forms of art whose ideal we approach more and more in increasing age, can give us pure joys beyond the limits of our first youth. The troupe—you smile already ; I spoke before of genius and now I am talking of a troupe ; but I must tell you that this expression sounds as strange to me as it does to you. I do not refer to any sort of professional community, and to nothing resembling a collection of individuals who had practised set pieces together in order to display themselves before others. I have not yet fathomed the authority of the Capitano, which is considerable. His authority, at any rate, is anything except that of a dancing-master. I have been able to observe that there is no definite rule for the composition of the *ensemble*—one day some dance and the next day others. Although I have spent many a long day among them I have never yet seen a rehearsal, and when I inquired when the children, among whom are some only five years old, learnt to dance they simply laughed at me ; the Capitano of course has his favourites just as we have favourites whom we always like to see again. The gift,

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however, seems to be the inheritance of every girl of this clan.

These girls are artists. You are smiling again. I know only too well what you want to say, but please do not imagine that I would dare to waste your precious leisure with news of modern tomfooleries, whose lack of substance is thrown into relief only by artistic surroundings. We two, shoulder to shoulder, have known how to resist the charms of Miss Duncan, and you will not annoy me by thinking that down here I could forget the moral obligation which such a brotherhood-in-arms imposes upon me. There is nothing "arty" about the art of these girls, children, and women. The sound of our literary artistry has not penetrated into the white gates of the Sacro Monte, and if it did it would smash itself against the primitive sense of its inhabitants. I would give a great deal to be able to tell you what this extraordinary difference between their dances and those of the North consists in. But even if I managed to do so, it would remain for me to add to this negative explanation the positive quality of this novelty, which alone could induce you to take the decision which I hope to engender in you by all the persuasive powers of my pen. I would confine myself to the gipsy element of these dances in order to awake in you a conception sympathetic to my plans, knowing how accessible your mind is to the slightest indication, if only I did not fear precisely this exceptionally sensitive accessibility in you ; you will not be able, as soon as I speak of artistic ideas, to think of anything but gipsy music when I talk of gipsies to you. And since you, thanks to the classical training of

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your fair desires, will not admit this kind of music even when it is interpreted by virtuosos like Liszt—and I cannot bring myself to blame you for it—you would nevertheless be unjust to my favourites. Our gipsies would not be able to dance to the melodies of the Hungarians. They would dislike this passion which clings too much to the surface. I cannot tell whether it is because they have too much or too little passion. It would no doubt be safer for me to link my arguments to your rich experience of Spanish dances. But, it is questionable whether it is not precisely the relative similarity of the dances which you know, which will make it more difficult for you to understand the peculiarity of our dancers. Otero and the others of her kind, also those who were not born in Spain, and I am thinking especially of one who was—my dear Count, how long ago that is—equally dear to us, the plucky Duclerc—all these Spaniards mime while they dance. Their dancing is simply something which makes their representation more easy for them without being its basis. They give us something which does not demand exclusively the medium of the dance. The same decadence is manifested in them as the decadence which we see so often in painting and music at home; a blurring of the boundaries of art, which I would sometimes credit with a touch of genius if you had not pointed out to me so often that barbarism does not merit such a title. I must admit that the confusion of the classical concepts of the dance, which are due to people like Otero, strike me as more valuable than the attempts born of a passion for restoration as expressed by certain English performers, because it is always preferable

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that some one who has anything to say at all should express himself in a manner which is suited to him, even if the results do not give us complete form, rather than that he should twist and turn without saying anything, even if his contortions are reminiscent of good models. A fragment may serve a future form of art while unintelligent imitation is worthless. You will agree with me if I describe the cultivated manner of Isadora Duncan as being more coarse than the manner of Otero. Permit me for one moment to continue this highly immodest discourse. While I am bringing owls to Athens I am nevertheless approaching my intention. Beside the ugliness of Isadora Duncan, who does not derive any advantage from her ugliness, Ruth St. Denis strikes me as being of an equally disadvantageous beauty; her beauty remains a factor outside her art. She assumes with less discretion than Otero more far-fetched motives and dances to their accompaniment. The type of Loie Fuller brings in another strange factor of their art. We honour them both, but we certainly do not honour what should be honoured in a dancer; their beautiful play of colours sets in motion the mechanism of the kaleidoscope and of electric illumination instead of the formative power of the human body. Something would be left even if one could eliminate their weakest side, their English sentimentality. Their efforts are directed at best towards the representation of a dancing butterfly, whose body consists of wings. If the gentle face of the Mademoiselle—always a very dubious addition—disappeared from the game, then only a rhythmic pattern of colour would remain. In other words,

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the modest boundaries of the dance are not extended, but very considerably reduced.

I think you may guess my intentions. My people are dancers, really dancers. Perhaps the number of varied mistakes to be seen on our modern stages makes me satisfied with less than is appropriate to your reporter. Perhaps their effect is so extraordinary on me because they avoid the mistakes of the others, and possibly the recognition that they remain within the confines of their art induces me to see positive value. For after all a man who conceives the idea of being simple in this age of noisy music earns for his harmless talent the appreciation given to something unusual, and he will be recognized only later on for the simpleton he is. It is also possible that my dancers benefit by their surroundings; nature which strikes us as so human that we interpret the slightest gesture as the language of nature; in other words, that fundamentally they are no different from the dancers of the modern stage who use a large apparatus for small ends. But even then they would display something of the refinement of genius. To me, however, they seem simple, possessing that natural simplicity which does not need to limit itself. Life glides in them into dancing as it does in the case of a great artist to the abstraction of his sensibility. And I believe that this nature which helps them might easily be a danger to others on a lower level. For is it not very difficult to invent an expression suitable to a given nature which does not appear to us as banal, superfluous, exaggerated? In fact, is it possible to attain it by artificial means if it does not emanate from sensibility? And the

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nature of these gipsies has its wealth for sponsor. I have seen them often and always found them new although their dances were the same. Not one of these gipsies dances like the other. All that we can recognize as constant are the contours of their figures. They perform the well-known Spanish national dances of Mauresque origin; Sevillana, Morrongo, Fandango, etc. . . . The Spaniards perform them with the Philistine conventionality, which we are familiar with through the French dancing lessons of our mothers when they learnt the *contre-danse*. Of course, a little more plastic and a little more pleasing. But these gipsies turn it into a living language. And nothing would be more beside the mark than if I said that they rise above this conventionality and invent free variations to a given theme. That is not at all the case. Their dances are as conventional as possible. Their sensibility never induces them to look for a piquant discord opposed to the natural rhythm. Nor can I say that they renew the traditions. I feel rather that they possess the tradition in a superior way, that they are nearer the original form of the tradition. Sometimes they strike me as akin to the Moors who invented these dances in a world of dreams. They are able to dream while dancing, and their dance liberates the dream from its erotic content. Their love-dances are absolutely unsexual. Love was no doubt their origin, but they expand into the richer world of sensuousness in which their gestures lose their specific erotic significance; this is the difference between them and the enraptured Spanish dancers who intoxicated poor old Lautrec; their art was really only nature, the quiver of the

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human animal, whose greatest tension degenerates into a cramp-like condition. Only Lautrec turned it into art, although he exaggerated what was cramp-like in them because he gained his rhythm from the exaggeration which was denied to his models. All that was charming in his models was Lautrec's recognition that the horrible contortions of these fellows lent themselves to the creation of new ornaments because the genesis of this art is too familiar to us, and because at such moments we do not look with the eyes of the appreciative connoisseur, but with the eyes of the seeking artist. The gipsies, of course, do not renounce every psychological factor, but they discriminate, whereas Lautrec's people did not. They chose just that which gives sufficient jaggedness to the conventional roundness of the dance in order to reveal its round plasticity as something which they have added. This equation makes a hundred inventions possible and necessary. Their originality does not shock us because we are able to follow its purpose ; since the main performers are small girls their play gains in reticence. If I must betray my final thoughts to you, I must say that these little creatures in their caves do not strike me as exotic, but in the highest degree European. They play as people played in the eighteenth century without reminding us of the *Dix Huitième*. It is not too bold to think of the Hungarian side of Haydn, even of Mozart himself, though not of Mozart's music. Their sweetest charm is derived perhaps from the curious fact that their familiar civilization emanates from a custom which is strange to us.

*Spanish Journey.* 1926.



## IX

D. H. LAWRENCE

### Mandas

THE coach was fairly full of people, returning from market. On these railways the third-class coaches are not divided into compartments. They are left open, so that one sees everybody, as down a room. The attractive saddle-bags, *bercole*, were disposed anywhere, and the bulk of the people settled down to a lively conversazione. It is much nicest, on the whole, to travel third-class on the railway. There is space, there is air, and it is like being in a lively inn, everybody in good spirits.

At our end was plenty of room. Just across the gangway was an elderly couple, like two children, coming home very happily. He was fat, fat all over, with a white moustache and a little not unamiable frown. She was a tall, lean, brown woman, in a brown full-skirted dress and black apron, with huge pocket. She wore no head covering, and her iron-grey hair was parted smoothly. They were rather pleased and excited being in the train. She took all her money out of her big pocket, and counted it and gave it to him: all the ten-lira notes, and the five-lira, and the two and the one, peering at the dirty scraps of pink-

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backed one-lira notes to see if they were good. Then she gave him her halfpennies. And he stowed them away in the trouser pocket, standing up to push them down his fat leg. And then one saw, to one's amazement, that the whole of his shirt-tail was left out behind, like a sort of apron worn backwards. Why—a mystery. He was one of those fat, good-natured, unheeding men with a little masterful frown, such as usually have tall, lean, hard-faced, obedient wives.

They were very happy. With amazement he watched us taking hot tea from the thermos flask. I think he too had suspected it might be a bomb. He had blue eyes and standing-up white eyebrows.

"Beautiful hot!" he said, seeing the tea steam. It is the inevitable exclamation. "Does it do you good?"

"Yes," said the queen bee. "Much good." And they both nodded complacently. They were going home.

The train was running over the malarial-looking sea plain—past the down-at-heel palm trees, past mosque-looking buildings. At a level crossing the woman crossing-keeper darted out vigorously with her red flag. And we rambled into the first village. It was built of sun-dried brick-adobe houses, thick adobe garden walls, with tile ridges to keep off the rain. In the enclosures were dark orange trees. But the clay-coloured villages, clay-dry, looked foreign: the next thing to mere earth they seem, like fox-holes or coyote colonies.

Looking back, one sees Cagliari bluff on her rock, rather fine, with the thin edge of the sea's blade

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curving round. It is rather hard to believe in the real sea, on this sort of clay-pale plain.

But soon we begin to climb to the hills. And soon the cultivation begins to be intermittent. Extraordinary how the heathy, moor-like hills come near the sea: extraordinary how scrubby and uninhabited the great spaces of Sardinia are. It is wild, with heath and arbutus scrub and a sort of myrtle, breast-high. Sometimes one sees a few head of cattle. And then again come the greyish arable patches, where the corn is grown. It is like Cornwall, like the Land's End region. Here and there, in the distance, are peasants working on the lonely landscape. Sometimes it is one man alone in the distance, showing so vividly in his black and white costume, small and far-off like a solitary magpie, and curiously distinct. All the strange magic of Sardinia is in this sight. Among the low, moor-like hills, away in a hollow of the wide landscape, one solitary figure, small but vivid black-and-white, working alone, as if eternally. There are patches and hollows of grey arable land, good for corn. Sardinia was once a great granary.

Usually, however, the peasants of the South have left off the costume. Usually it is the invisible soldier's grey-green cloth, the Italian khaki. Wherever you go, wherever you be, you see this khaki, this grey-green war clothing. How many millions of yards of the thick, excellent, but hateful material the Italian Government must have provided I don't know: but enough to cover Italy with a felt carpet, I should think. It is everywhere. It cases the tiny children in stiff and neutral frocks and coats, it covers their extinguished fathers, and

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sometimes it even encloses the women in its warmth. It is symbolic of the universal grey mist that has come over men, the extinguishing of all bright individuality, the blotting out of all wild singleness. Oh, democracy! Oh, khaki democracy!

This is very different from Italian landscape. Italy is always almost dramatic, and perhaps invariably romantic. There is drama in the Plains of Lombardy and romance in the Venetian lagoons, and sheer scenic excitement in nearly all the hilly parts of the peninsula. Perhaps it is the natural floridity of limestone formations. But Italian landscape is really eighteenth-century landscape, to be represented in that romantic-classic manner which makes everything rather marvellous and very topical: aqueducts, and ruins upon sugar-loaf mountains, and craggy ravines and Wilhelm Meister waterfalls: all up and down.

Sardinia is another thing. Much wider, much more ordinary, not up-and-down at all, but running away into the distance. Unremarkable ridges of moor-like hills running away, perhaps to a bunch of dramatic peaks on the south-west. This gives a sense of space, which is so lacking in Italy. Lovely space about one, and travelling distances—nothing finished, nothing final. It is like liberty itself, after the peaky confinement of Sicily. Room—give me room—give me room for my spirit: and you can have all the toppling crags of romance.

So we ran on through the gold of the afternoon, across a wide, almost Celtic landscape of hills, our little train winding and puffing away very nimbly.

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Only the heath and scrub, breast-high, man-high, are too big and brigand-like for a Celtic land. The horns of black, wild-looking cattle show sometimes.

After a long pull, we come to a station after a stretch of loneliness. Each time it looks as if there were nothing beyond—no more habitations. And each time we come to a station.

Most of the people have left the train. And as with men driving in a gig, who get down at every public-house, so the passengers usually alight for an airing at each station. Our old fat friend stands up and tucks his shirt tail comfortably in his trousers, which trousers all the time make one hold one's breath, for they seem at each very moment to be just dropping right down: and he clambers out, followed by the long, brown stalk of a wife.

So the train sits comfortably for five or ten minutes, in the way the trains have. At last we hear whistles and horns, and our old fat friend running and clinging like a fat crab to the very end of the train as it sets off. At the same instant a loud shriek and a bunch of shouts from outside. We all jump up. There, down the line, is the long brown stalk of a wife. She had just walked back to a house some hundred yards off, for a few words, and has now seen the train moving.

Now behold her with her hands thrown to heaven, and hear the wild shriek "Madonna!" through all the hubbub. But she picks up her two skirt-knees, and with her thin legs in grey stockings starts with a mad rush after the train. In vain. The train inexorably pursues its course. Prancing, she reaches one end of the platform as we leave the other end. Then she realizes it is

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not going to stop for her. And then, oh horror, her long arms thrown out in wild supplication after the retreating train: then flung aloft to God: then brought down in absolute despair on her head. And this is the last sight we have of her, clutching her poor head in agony and doubling forward. She is left—she is abandoned.

The poor fat husband has been all the time on the little outside platform at the end of the carriage, holding out his hand to her and shouting frenzied scolding to her and frenzied yells for the train to stop. And the train has not stopped. And she is left—left on that God-forsaken station in the waning light.

So, his face all bright, his eyes round and bright as two stars, absolutely transfigured by dismay, chagrin, anger and distress, he comes and sits in his seat, ablaze, stiff, speechless. His face is almost beautiful in its blaze of conflicting emotions. For some time he is as if unconscious in the midst of his feelings. Then anger and resentment crop out of his consternation. He turns with a flash to the long-nosed, insidious, Phœnician-looking guard. Why couldn't they stop the train for her! And immediately, as if some one had set fire to him, off flares the guard. Heh!—the train can't stop for every person's convenience! The train is a train—the time-table is a time-table. What did the old woman want to take her trips down the line for? Heh! She pays the penalty for her own inconsiderateness. Had *she* paid for the train—heh? And the fat man all the time firing off his unheeding and unheeded answers. One minute—only one minute—if he, the conductor, had told

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the driver ! if he, the conductor, had shouted ! A poor woman ! Not another train ! What was she going to do ! her ticket ? And no money. A poor woman——

There was a train back to Cagliari that night, said the conductor, at which the fat man nearly burst out of his clothing like a bursting seed-pod. He bounced on his seat. What good was that ? What good was a train back to Cagliari, when their home was in Snelli ! Making matters worse——

So they bounced and jerked and argued at one another to their hearts' content. Then the conductor retired, smiling subtly, in a way they have. Our fat friend looked at us with hot, angry, ashamed, grieved eyes and said it was a shame. Yes, we chimed, it *was* a shame. Whereupon a self-important miss who said she came from some Collegio at Cagliari advanced and asked a number of impertinent questions in a tone of pert sympathy. After which our fat friend, left alone, covered his clouded face with his hand, turned his back on the world, and gloomed.

It had all been so dramatic that in spite of ourselves we laughed, even while the queen-bee shed a few tears.

Well, the journey lasted hours. We came to a station, and the conductor said we must get out : these coaches went no further. Only two coaches would proceed to Mandas. So we climbed out with our traps, and our fat friend with his saddle-bag, the picture of misery.

The one coach into which we clambered was rather crowded. The only other coach was most

## MANDAS

of it first-class. And the rest of the train was freight. We were two insignificant passenger wagons at the end of a long string of freight vans and trucks.

There was an empty seat, so we sat in it : only to realize after about five minutes that a thin old woman with two children—her grandchildren—was chuntering her head off because it was *her* seat—why she had left it she didn't say. And under my legs was her bundle of bread. She nearly went off her head. And over my head, on the little rack, was her *bercola*, her saddle-bag. Fat soldiers laughed at her good-naturedly, but she fluttered and flipped like a tart, featherless old hen. Since she had another seat and was quite comfortable, we smiled and let her chunter. So she clawed her bread bundle from under my legs, and, clutching it and a fat child, sat tense.

It was getting quite dark. The conductor came and said that there was no more paraffin. If what there was in the lamps gave out, we should have to sit in the dark. There was no more paraffin all along the line. So he climbed on the seats, and after a long struggle, with various boys striking matches for him, he managed to obtain a light as big as a pea. We sat in this *clairobscur*, and looked at the sombre-shadowed faces round us : the fat soldier with a gun, the handsome soldier with huge saddle-bags, the weird, dark little man who kept exchanging a baby with a solid woman who had a white cloth tied round her head, a tall peasant woman in costume, who darted out at a dark station and returned triumphant with a piece of chocolate : a young and interested young man,



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who told us every station. And the man who spat : there is always one.

Gradually the crowd thinned. At a station we saw our fat friend go by, bitterly, like a betrayed soul, his bulging saddle-bag hanging before and after, but no comfort in it now—no comfort. The pea of light from the paraffin lamp grew smaller. We sat in incredible dimness, and the smell of sheep's wool and peasant, with our fat and stoic young man to tell us where we were. The other dusky faces began to sink into a dead gloomy silence. Some took to sleep. And the little train ran on and on, through unknown Sardinian darkness. In despair we drained the last drop of tea and ate the last crusts of bread. We knew we must arrive some time.

*Sea and Sardinia.* 1923.

## X

NORMAN DOUGLAS

### Tunisia

THERE is a daily recurring spectacle at Tozeur which enchanted me: the camping ground at dawn. Here the caravans repose after their desert journeys; hence they start, at every hour, in picturesque groups and movement. But whoever wishes for a rare impression of Oriental life must go there before sunrise, and wait for the slow-coming dawn. It is all dark at first, but presently a sunny beam flashes through the distant palms, followed by another, and yet another—long shafts of yellow light travelling through the murk; then you begin to perceive that the air is heavy with the smoke of extinguished campfires and suspended particles of dust; the ground, heaving, gives birth to dusky shapes; there are weird groans and gurglings of silhouetted apparitions; and still you cannot clearly distinguish earth from air—it is as if one watched the creation of a new world out of Chaos.

But even before the sun has topped the crowns of the palms, the element of mystery is eliminated; the vision resolves itself into a common plain of sand, authentic camels and everyday Arabs

## MODERN TRAVEL

moving about their business—another caravan, in short. . . .

And at midday ?

Go, at that hour, to the thickest part of the grove ; then is the time ; it must be the prick of noon, for the slanting lights of morning and eve are quite another concern ; only at noon can one appreciate the incomparable effects of palm-leaf shadows. The whole garden is permeated with light that streams down from some indiscoverable source, and its rigid trunks, painted in a warm, lustreless grey, are splashed with an infinity of keen lines of darker tint, since the sunshine, percolating through myriads of sharp leaves, etches a filigree pattern upon all that lies below. You look into endless depths of forest, but there is no change in decorative design ; the identical sword-pattern is for ever repeated on the identical background, fading away, at last, in a silvery haze.

Here are no quaint details to attract the eye ; no gorgeous colour-patterns or pleasing irregularities of form ; the frosted beauty of the scene appeals rather to the intelligence. Contrasted with the wanton blaze of green, the contorted trunks and labyrinthine shadow-meanderings of our woodlands, these palm groves, despite their frenzied exuberance, figure forth the idea of reserve and chastity ; an impression which is heightened by the ethereal striving of those branchless columns, by their joyous and effective rupture of the horizontal, so different from the careworn tread of our oaks and beeches.

Later on, when the intervening vines and fruit trees are decked in leaves, the purity of this geometrical design will be impaired. . . .

## TUNISIA

The origin of Tozeur is lost in the grey mists of antiquity, since a site like this must have been cultivated from time immemorial; the first classical writer to mention the town is Ptolemy, who calls it Tisouros; on Peutinger's Tables it is marked "Thusuro." The modern settlement has wandered away from this ancient one which now slumbers—together, maybe, with its hoary Egyptian prototype—under high-piled mounds whereon have arisen, since those days, a few mediæval monuments and crumbling maraboutic shrines and houses of more modern date, patched together with antique building blocks and fragments of marble cornices: an island of sand and oblivion, lapped by soft-surfing palms.

They call it Bled-el-Adher nowadays, and this is the place to spend the evening. I was there yesterday, perhaps for the last time.

It exhales a soporific, world-forgotten fragrance. There is no market here, no commercial or social life, save a few greybeards discussing memories on some doorstep; the only mirthful note is a swarm of young boys playing hockey on the sandheaps, amid furious yells and scrimmages.

True hockey being out of the question on account of the deep sand, they have invented a variant, a simple affair: they arrange themselves roughly into two parties, and the ball is struck into the air with a palm branch from the one to the other; there, where it alights, a general rush ensues to get hold of it, clouds of sand arising out of a maze of intertwining arms and legs. The lucky possessor is entitled to have the next stroke, and the precision and force of their hitting is remarkable; they evidently do little else all day long.

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I noticed an element of good humour and fair play not prevalent among the Gafsa boys ; there was no peevish squabbling, and I only saw one fight which was a perfectly correct transaction—nobody interfering with the two combatants, who hammered lustily at each other's faces, and at last separated, satisfied and streaming with blood. For some days past they had seen my interest in the game, and yesterday I observed that it was suddenly suspended ; a consultation was taking place, and presently one of the boys approached me and politely asked whether I would not care to join ; if so, I might have his club ; and he placed the weapon and ball in my hand. The proposition tempted me ; it is not every day that one is invited in such gentlemanly fashion to wallow on all fours with young Arabs. I made one or two strokes, not amiss, that called forth huge applause ; and then returned, rather regretfully, to my sand-heap, to meditate on my own mis-spent youth, a subject that very rarely troubles me.

There is a tall, round building that stands within a hundred yards of where I sat ; they call it the " Roman " tower, and the foundation-stones, though not *in situ*, are probably of that period ; it was a Byzantine bell-tower, then a minaret, now a ruin. And here, confronting me, lie a few stones, that are all that remain of a pagan temple which became a Christian basilica and afterwards a mosque. In the fifth century Tisouros—this slumberous Bled-el-Adher—was a dependency of the Greek " Duke of Gafsa " (how strange it sounds ! ) ; Florentius, its bishop, was executed by the king of the Vandals ; Chris-

## TUNISIA

tian churches survived, side by side with mosques as late as the fourteenth century. There seems to have been no great religious intolerance in those days.

They showed me a gold coin of the Emperor Gordian—the same who built the amphitheatre at El-Djem—which was found here, as well as some lamps and sculptured fragments of stone. Bruce speaks of cipollino columns; they are still to be seen, if you care to look for them, split up, since his time, to mend walls and doorsteps. Tozeur must have looked well enough under the later Empire.

And now, sand-heaps and a brood of young savages, shouting at their game. It is long since these people knew the meaning of refined things, although some of the houses, their fronts decorated with gracious designs in brickwork, testify to a not extinct artistic feeling—the citizens once enjoyed a reputation for delicacy and love of letters. There is nothing like systematic misgovernment for degrading mankind, and I think it likely that the gradual fusion of the Arab and Berber races, so antagonistic in all their aspirations, may have helped to abrade the finer edges of both parent-stocks. But the native civilization was not remarkable at any time.

The climate, and then their religion, has made them hard and incurious; it is a land of unpromising masculinity. The softer element—thanks to the Koran—has become non-existent, and you will look in vain for the creative-feminine, for those intermediate types of ambiguous, submerged sexuality, the constructive poets and dreamers, the men of imagination and women of

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will, that give to good society in the north its sweetness and *chatoyance*; for those "sports" and eccentrics who, among our lower classes, are centrifugal—perpetually tending to diverge in this or that direction. The native is pre-eminently centripetal. His life is reduced to its simplest physiological expression; that capacity of reflection, of forming suggestive and fruitful concepts, which lies at the bottom of every kind of progress or culture, has been sucked out of him by the sun and by Mahomet's teaching.

A land of violence, remorseless and relentless; the very beetles, so placid elsewhere, seem to have acquired a nervously virile temperament; they scurry about the sand at my feet with an air of rage and determination.

So I mused, while the game went on boisterously in the mellow light of sunset till, from some decaying minaret near by, there poured down a familiar long-drawn wail—the call to prayer. It was a golden hour among those mounds of sand, and I grew rather sad to think that I should never see the place again. How one longs to engrave certain memories upon the brain, to keep them untarnished and carry them about on one's journeyings, in all their freshness. The happiest life, seen in perspective, can hardly be better than a stringing together of such odd little moments.

*Fountains in the Sand.* 1912.

## XI

### STEWART EDWARD WHITE

#### East Africa

IN looking back on the multitudinous pictures that the word Africa bids rise in my memory, four stand out more distinctly than the others. Strangely enough, these are by no means all pictures of average country—the sort of thing one would describe as typical. Perhaps, in a way, they symbolize more the spirit of the country to me, for certainly they represent but a small minority of its infinitely varied aspects. But since we must make a start somewhere, and since for some reason these four crowd most insistently in the recollection, it might be well to begin with them.

Our camp was pitched under a single large mimosa tree near the edge of a deep and narrow ravine down which a stream flowed. A semicircle of low mountains hemmed us in at the distance of several miles. The other side of the semicircle was occupied by the upthrow of a low rise blocking off an horizon at its nearest point but a few hundred yards away. Trees marked the course of the stream; low scattered bushes alternated with open plain. The grass grew high. We had to cut it out to make camp.



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Nothing indicated that we were otherwise situated than in a very pleasant, rather wide grass valley in the embrace of the mountains. Only a walk of a few hundred yards atop the upthrow of the low rise revealed the fact that it was in reality the lip of a bench, and that beyond it the country fell away in sheer cliffs whose ultimate drop was some fifteen hundred feet. One could sit atop and dangle his feet over unguessed abysses.

For a week we had been hunting for greater kudu. Each day Memba Sasa and I went in one direction, while Mavrouki and Kongoni took another line. We looked carefully for signs, but found none fresher than the month before. Plenty of other game made the country interesting ; but we were after a shy and valuable prize, so dared not shoot lesser things. At last, at the end of the week, Mavrouki came in with a tale of eight lions seen in the low scrub across the stream. The kudu business was about finished, as far as this place went, so we decided to take a look for the lions.

We ate by lantern, and at the first light were ready to start. But at that moment, across the slope of the rim a few hundred yards away, appeared a small group of sing-sing. These are a beautiful big beast, with widespread horns, proud and wonderful, like Landseer's stags, and I wanted one of them very much. So I took the Springfield and dropped behind the line of some bushes. The stalk was of the ordinary sort. One has to remain behind cover, to keep down wind, to make no quick movements. Sometimes this takes considerable manœuvring ; especially, as now, in the case of a small band fairly well scattered out

## EAST AFRICA

for feeding. Often after one has succeeded in placing them all safely behind the scattered cover, a straggler will step out into view. Then the hunter must stop short, must slowly, oh very, very slowly, sink down out of sight ; so slowly, in fact, that he must not seem to move, but rather to melt imperceptibly away. Then he must take up his progress at a lower plane of elevation. Perhaps he needs merely to stoop ; or he may crawl on hands and knees ; or he may lie flat and hitch himself forward by his toes, pushing his gun ahead. If one of the beasts suddenly looks very intently in his direction, he must freeze into no matter what uncomfortable position, and so remain an indefinite time. Even a hotel-bred child to whom you have rashly made advances stares no longer nor more intently than a buck that cannot make you out.

I had no great difficulty with this lot, but slipped up quite successfully to within one hundred and fifty yards. There I raised my head behind a little bush to look. Three does grazed nearest me, their coats rough against the chill of early morning. Up the slope were two more does and two funny, fuzzy babies. An immature buck occupied the extreme left with three young ladies. But the big buck, the leader, the boss of the lot, I could not see anywhere. Of course he must be about, and I craned my neck cautiously here and there trying to make him out.

Suddenly, with one accord, all turned and began to trot rapidly away to the right, their heads high. In the strange manner of animals, they had received telepathic alarm, and had instantly obeyed. Then beyond and far to the

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right I at last saw the beast I had been looking for. The old villain had been watching me all the time!

The little herd in single file made their way rapidly along the face of the rise. They were headed in the direction of the stream. Now, I happened to know that at this point the stream-cañon was bordered by sheer cliffs. Therefore, the sing-sing must round the hill, and not cross the stream. By running to the top of the hill I might catch a glimpse of them somewhere below. So I started on a jog-trot, trying to hit the golden mean of speed that would still leave me breath to shoot. This was an affair of some nicety in the tall grass. Just before I reached the actual slope, however, I revised my schedule. The reason was supplied by a rhino that came grunting to his feet about seventy yards away. He had not seen me, and he had not smelled me, but the general disturbance of all these events had broken into his early morning nap. He looked to me like a person who is cross before breakfast, so I ducked low and ran around him. The last I saw of him he was still standing there, quite disgruntled, and evidently intending to write to the directors about it.

Arriving at the top, I looked eagerly down. The cliff fell away at an impossible angle, but sheer below ran out a narrow bench fifty yards wide. Around the point of the hill to my right—where the herd had gone—a game trail dropped steeply to this bench. I arrived just in time to see the sing-sing, still trotting, file across the bench and over its edge, on some other invisible game trail, to continue their descent of the cliff. The big buck brought up the rear. At the very

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edge he came to a halt, and looked back, throwing his head up and his nose out so that the heavy fur on his neck stood forward like a ruff. It was a last glimpse of him, so I held my little best, and pulled trigger.

This happened to be one of those shots I spoke of—which the perpetrator accepts with a thankful and humble spirit. The sing-sing leaped high in the air and plunged over the edge of the bench. I signalled the camp—in plain sight—to come and get the head and meat, and sat down to wait. And while waiting, I looked out on a scene that has since been to me one of my four symbolizations of Africa.

The morning was dull, with grey clouds through which at wide intervals streamed broad bands of misty light. Below me the cliff fell away clear to a gorge in the depths of which flowed a river. Then the land began to rise, broken, sharp, tumbled, terrible, tier after tier, gorge after gorge, one twisted range after the other, across a breathlessly immeasurable distance. The prospect was full of shadows thrown by the tumult of lava. In those shadows one imagined stranger abysses. Far down to the right a long narrow lake inaugurated a flatter, alkali-whitened country of low cliffs in long straight lines. Across the distances proper to a dozen horizons the tumbled chaos heaved and fell. The eye sought rest at the bounds usual to its accustomed world—and went on. There was no roundness to the earth, no grateful curve to drop this great fierce country beyond a healing horizon out of sight. The immensity of primal space was in it, and the simplicity of primal things—rough, unfinished,

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full of mystery. There was no colour. The scene was done in slate grey, darkening to the opaque where a tiny distant rain squall started ; lightening in the nearer shadows to reveal half-guessed peaks ; brightening unexpectedly into broad short bands of misty grey light slanting from the grey heavens above to the sombre tortured immensity beneath. It was such a thing as Gustave Doré might have imaged to serve as abiding place for the fierce chaotic spirit of the African wilderness.

I sat there for some time hugging my knees, waiting for the men to come. The tremendous landscape seemed to have been willed to immobility. The rain squalls forty miles or more away did not appear to shift their shadows ; the rare slanting bands of light from the clouds were as constant as though they were falling through cathedral windows. But nearer at hand other things were forward. The birds, thousands of them, were doing their best to cheer things up. The roucoulements of doves rose from the bushes down the face of the cliffs ; the bell bird uttered his clear ringing note ; the chime bird gave his celebrated imitation of a really gentlemanly sixty-horse-power touring car hinting you out of the way with the mellowness of a chimed horn ; the bottle bird poured gallons of guggling essence of happiness from his silver jug. From the direction of camp, evidently jumped by the boys, a steinbuck loped gracefully, pausing every few minutes to look back, his dainty legs tense, his sensitive ears pointed toward the direction of disturbance.

And now, along the face of the cliff, I began to make out the flashing of much movement, half

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glimpsed through the bushes. Soon a fine old-man baboon, his tail arched after the dandified fashion of the baboon aristocracy, stepped out, looked around, and bounded forward. Other old men followed him, and then the young men, and a miscellaneous lot of half-grown youngsters. The ladies brought up the rear, with the babies. These rode their mothers' backs, clinging desperately while they leaped along, for all the world like the pathetic monkey "jockeys" one sees strapped to the backs of big dogs in circuses. When they had approached to within fifty yards, I remarked "hullo!" to them. Instantly they all stopped. Those in front stood up on their hind legs; those behind clambered to points of vantage on rocks and the tops of small bushes. They all took a good long look at me. Then they told me what they thought about me personally, the fact of my being there, and the rude way I had startled them. Their remarks were neither complimentary nor refined. The old men, in especial, got quite profane, and screamed excited billingsgate. Finally they all stopped at once, dropped on all fours, and loped away, their ridiculous long tails curved in a half arc. Then for the first time I noticed that, under cover of the insults, the women and children had silently retired. Once more I was left to the familiar gentle bird calls, and the vast silence of the wilderness beyond.

*The Land of Footprints.* 1912.

## XII

H. W. NEVINSON

### West Africa

IN my ignorance I took too little precaution against lions, though they were increasing in those parts, feeding on eland and smaller deer, but chiefly on Burchell's zebra, or quagga as it was commonly called. Yet I never actually saw a lion, though I sometimes heard them snuffling and grunting at night not far away. I saw only one herd of zebra (a beautiful vision !), and came near only one family of elephants, who made deep holes in a dry river-bed at night, and finding water, celebrated their joy with a family romp, flinging the water over each other, stamping their huge feet on the sand, devouring the honey-sweet flowers of the aloe, and forcing a road through the forest, careless of their tracks. Leopards were common, but remained unseen. Various buck and antelopes were plentiful, and, happily for our dinners, so were francolins (red-legged partridges), and guinea-fowl, hard to shoot by day because they set sentries and run like battalions in defeat, but are often to be caught roosting on trees at night. Eagles, bustards, parrots, weaver-birds, and many other kinds abounded, and very

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noticeable in early morning was a dove that sang an almost perfect minor scale, running sadly downward as though to utter the universal mourning of creation. There was also a large hornbill whose hollow booming was said to presage rain, and certainly rain fell at times as though emptied from immeasurable slop-pails.

It was the wet season, but for the first six or eight days and nights we had to trek through a dry country of bare hill and valley, where no rain ever falls, and the oxen struggle onward, chiefly by night, exerting all their strength as knowing the danger. Only at intervals one sees and smells patches of damp sulphuric ground ; or one may find a dribble of water by digging twelve feet down. But for the rest of the journey I was never entirely without water for a day and night, at all events after we had climbed the long mountain ridge, vaguely called Humpata, rising to nearly 5,000 feet above the sea and forming the approach to the great central plateau which sheds the Zambesi with its tributaries south and east into the Indian Ocean, and the Kassai and other tributaries into the Congo and South Atlantic, while the Cuanza has cut a passage north-west direct into the sea. When we had cleared the dry country, water was, in fact, our chief obstacle. But the wagon would sometimes stick, and sometimes slide down a steep place, rolling on to the top of the oxen, or threatening to swing sideways and turn right over. Those were the moments of extreme peril, when one has not time to think of danger or of death, but can only do the right thing as though by some ancestral memory, inherited through incalculable ages.



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Dangerous also were the deep pools beside the track that the immigrant Boers call "slaughter holes." These the oxen, who love to wallow in liquid mud all day when loose, avoid like the pit of hell when harnessed up, and rather than risk sliding into them they will screw the wagon sideways into the forest, confusing the whole team, and often knocking off their own horns against the trees, causing terrible agony. One drives the team only by calling the names of the four last oxen, always chosen for their experience and good sense. If you want to steer the wagon to the right, you call on the two oxen on the left side of each couple, and they push hard against the yokes with their shoulders, thus swinging the wagon to the right. You call on the opposite two on the right if you want the wagon to swing to the left. It is exactly like coaxing a rudderless eight. And that is how you progress hour after hour in ceaseless watchfulness, unless you condescend to use a Kaffir boy to act as "toe-lead." But neither the calling of their names nor the "toe-lead" is of any avail if the oxen think they are going to get their feet wet in a "slaughter hole." Nor will an ox work when it rains, for fear of getting a sore hump—so very depressing!

Another idiosyncrasy of the trek ox is his passion for salt. If you do not give him an occasional lick of salt, his teeth drop out, and so in the wagon we carried bags of rock-salt for his pleasure. I gave it as a Sunday treat, and by the way that the oxen came snuffling round the place where the bags lay, I am convinced they knew when Sunday came as well as the Archbishop of Canterbury. But it is not really an idiosyn-

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crasy. All living creatures in that part of Africa pine for salt. There is salt in the sea, and there is salt in the salt-pans of Katanga, which the Belgians had closed as a trade monopoly, but I think there is none in the hundreds of miles between. Where we give a bun to children at a Sunday-school treat, a good kind missionary of Angola gives a pinch of rock-salt on a leaf. Put a little salt water on an open track, and in a few minutes it will be ablaze with gorgeous butterflies. The salt of sweat attracts all insects, just as it attracts horses when they bite each other. Once when I was going on foot, I thought to refresh myself after a long march by putting salt in my canvas bath. In no time my little tent swarmed with bees, and when I got out of the water I was covered with them from head to foot, all sucking salt as they suck honey with Ariel in England. Next morning I laid sugar, condensed milk, and a bag of salt side by side, and waited. A few bees came to the sugar, a few more to the condensed milk, but the bag of salt was so thickly covered that I could see no spaces between the bodies of the bees, and could stroke them down as one can stroke them when they swarm. Is it possible that this passion for salt is inherited with a dim memory of that immortal sea in which all living things had their first being so many million ages ago? Perhaps it is not only man who sings with the poet :

“ I will go back to the great sweet mother,  
Mother and lover of men, the sea.” <sup>1</sup>

Where no salt was to be had, the Chibokwe women burnt a marsh-grass into a potash powder as

<sup>1</sup> Swinburne : “ The Triumph of Time.”

## MODERN TRAVEL

substitute. Among the Chibokwe also I found that salt was by far the best small change, the next best thing being safety-pins to fasten their little loin-cloths. Beads were out of fashion, and "cloth" (*i.e.* lengths of calico from Portugal, or, the best, from Manchester) served for large currency; but if a native squatted down in front of me, put out a long pink tongue and stroked it appealingly with a finger, I knew it was salt he wanted for a tip.

With the wagon I trekked through January and February chiefly across the forest plateau which culminates in a wet and bare plain called Bourru-Bourru by the natives, who also call the top of a bald man's head his Bourru-Bourru. New every morning were the troubles—the drenching rain, the straying oxen, the crooked axle that had to be hammered out in an extemporised furnace, the turbulent river over which we swam the oxen, sailed the bed of the wagon as a raft, and dragged the wheels with the oxen's chain. Five rivers had to be crossed before we reached the upland vaguely marked as Bihé on the maps. On the way we passed a few deserted villages, but hardly any inhabitant, the natives having removed, chiefly in fear of the slave-trade; for they lived in perpetual dread of being sold or seized and carried off to San Thomé—*Okalunga*, or the "abyss of hell" as they called it. But we passed a French Catholic monastery or mission at Caconda, where a few Fathers were trying to instruct native boys in useful arts such as carpentry, sometimes redeeming the boys from the slavers at their own expense. And we passed the important Portuguese fort of Belmonte, and the

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central depôt of the Companhia Nacional at Cayala, where slaves and other goods might be purchased. From there I walked northward through wet but fairly open country to an English Mission Station of Plymouth Brethren at Ochilonda, where I found F. S. Arnot, a missionary of long experience, and an explorer whose name will be recorded in African history for his work in the Garagantze region and his discovery of the Zambesi's upper course. I also walked south to Kamundongo, where the "American Board" had a small Mission under F. C. Wellman, who had acquired great knowledge of native customs and folklore. I think that Mission was Congregationalist, and so was the other Mission I advanced to in the wagon a few days later—the station at Chisamba, conducted by Mr. and Mrs. Currie and Mr. and Mrs. Moffat, all Americans. Besides two Roman Catholic Missions that I saw, there were about eight in all, and it was remarkable that nearly all the workers were Americans. Even the two solitary men whom I found far away beyond Mashiko, in their little hut at Chinjamba, though working for the British Plymouth Brethren, were themselves Americans and had studied medicine (that excellent basis for the conversion of natives) in American hospitals. Eight, or even ten, Mission Stations are not much for a country four times the size of Great Britain and Ireland together. But few though they were, the missionaries exercised some influence for good. Amid traders and planters whose very existence depended upon violence, deceit, and slavery, here were white men who kept their word, dealt honestly, and put the native's gain before their

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own. From end to end of Africa a white man's honesty is rarer than diamonds or gold, but missionaries maintain a tradition of its existence.

Criticism of missionaries is easy and common. It was surprising to hear a grown man teaching intelligent natives the Book of Genesis as literal history. It was almost painful when an intelligent native asked what would have happened if Adam had refused to eat the apple. It was bewildering to be informed that the Russo-Japanese war was accurately foretold in the Book of Daniel. It was perplexing to witness the marriage of a converted chief to one of his numerous wives, while the others stood round with his twenty-four children and joined in the equivalent to "The Voice that breathed o'er Eden." But I do not care to criticize people whose kindness to myself was so unbounded, and hospitality so ungrudging, though sometimes the limit of their own food was almost reached, even to the last bag of black beans and a few tea-leaves, already used more than once. Only those who have lived as I did for weeks together among the dirt and cursing of ox-wagons, or have tramped with none but savages far through deserts wet or dry, have been plunged in slime or consumed with thirst, worn down with fever and poisoned by invisible insects, could appreciate what it means to come at last into a Mission Station, to hear the quiet and pleasant voices, and feel again that sense of inward peace which is said to be a reward of holy living. I stayed three weeks at Chisamba, and many days at two other Mission Stations, and often when I went to bed, I used to think to myself: "Here I actually am, free from hunger and thirst, in a silent room,

## WEST AFRICA

with a real bed and real sheets ; but people at home probably picture me dying in the depths of a dismal forest while pygmies sharpen their poisoned arrows and make their saucepans ready, or a lion stands rampant on one side of me, and, on the other side, a unicorn."

It is true that all the missionaries, knowing by experience the dangers of my business, used, morning and evening, to pray for my deliverance, and that was rather embarrassing, rather depressing. But, after all, it was very polite of them, and I was never the worse for their prayers. Besides, as the transport-rider refused to take his oxen farther than Chisamba, the Mission there spent much trouble in collecting a little band of sixteen carriers to complete my journey inland—half of them to carry my tent, food, and kit, and the young boys to carry such food as the others wanted for themselves. That is how young carriers are trained by degrees till they will carry an average load of sixty pounds on their heads for a long day's march. For their own advantage they will take as much as 100 lb., or even 120 lb. They balance the loads, tightly fastened, between two long sticks, and when my loads were ready tied up and set in a row, the carriers at a given word charged for them, all making at full speed for the food loads, because they knew those would grow lighter day by day.

So we started in file from Chisamba, all on foot, and on the third day we crossed the Cuanza, there about the breadth of the Thames at Windsor, but much swifter, and full of hippos. A permanent ferry of narrow dug-outs took us over for the payment of four yards of "cloth." On the

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farther bank we entered the " Hungry Country "—a long stretch of deserted or uninhabited land, sandy for the most part, but well watered and covered with trees. It was said that even animals could not live there, but I found plenty of antelopes, porcupines, wart-hogs, and other beasts, and at night the leopards snuffed and grunted and roared around us as usual. The country was believed to lie under a curse, and I could give no other reason for its desertion.

For myself, throughout my long journey on foot, like all hungry men (in Chitral or Ladysmith, for instance) I was constantly imagining the delight of a London restaurant. At one Portuguese trading-station I bought a few tins of English preserved meat, left there, I suppose, by a previous British traveller who had died. They were tainted with age, but every day on the march I used to wonder whether I could afford to enjoy an English tin that night. And yet some people have said I am no true patriot!

My carriers apportioned their food for the distance very carefully, and if one of them fell sick or failed the others drove him along with whips or their small axes. But if a slave failed or dropped he was murdered at once, and skeletons that I found along the route clearly showed the gash made in the skull by the axe. The whole length of the path was strewn with white bones—the bones of slaves, for slaves are not buried, but free carriers are. The bushes on each side of the path were hung with wooden shackles, which had clamped the hands or feet of the dead slaves at night and now were useless, or were cast aside when the traders had passed the greater part of

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the Hungry Country and knew that escape of the slaves was impossible. From end to end the narrow path—so narrow that one must bring one foot round in front of the other, like a native or a baboon—was a road of death. My little party walked quickly, but the passage took us nine days. In the midst of it, one clear night, I saw the tail of the Great Bear twisting round above the northern horizon, and I knew that just out of sight were two big stars still pointing to the Pole.

*More Changes, More Chances.* 1925.



## XIII

CHARLES M. DOUGHTY

### Among the Beduins

Now longwhile our black booths had been built upon the sandy stretches, lying before the swelling white Nefûd side: the lofty coast of Irnân in front, whose cragged breaches, where is any footing for small herbs nourished of this barren atmosphere, are the harbour of wild goats, which never drink. The summer's night at end, the sun stands up as a crown of hostile flames from that huge covert of inhospitable sandstone bergs; the desert day dawns not little and little, but it is noontide in an hour. The sun, entering as a tyrant upon the waste landscape, darts upon us a torment of fiery beams, not to be remitted till the far-off evening. No matins here of birds; not a rock partridge-cock, calling with blithesome chuckle over the extreme waterless desolation. Grave is that giddy heat upon the crown of the head; the ears tingle with a flickering shrillness, a subtle crepitation it seems, in the glassiness of this sun-stricken nature: the hot sand-blink is in the eyes, and there is little refreshment to find in the tents' shelter; the worsted booths leak to this fiery rain of sunny light. Mountains looming like

## AMONG THE BEDUINS

dry bones through the thin air, stand far around about us : the savage flank of Ybba Moghrair, the high spire and ruinous stacks of el-Jebâl, Chebâd, the coast of Helwân. Herds of the weak nomad camels waver dispersedly, seeking pasture in the midst of this hollow fainting country, where but lately the swarming locusts have fretted every green thing. This silent air burning about us, we endure breathless till the late afternoon : when the dazing Arabs in the tents revive after their heavy hours. The lingering day draws down to the sun-setting ; the herdsmen, weary of the sun, come again with the cattle, to taste in their menzils the first sweetness of mirth and repose. The day is done, and there rises the nightly freshness of this purest mountain air : and then to the cheerful song and the cup at the common fire. The moon rises ruddy from that solemn obscurity of jebel like a mighty beacon : and the morrow will be as this day, days deadly drowned in the sun of the summer wilderness.

The rugged country eastward, where we came in another remove, was little known to our Beduins ; only an elder generation had wandered there : and yet they found even the lesser waters. We journeyed forth in high plains (the altitude always nearly 4,000 feet) and in passages, stretching betwixt mountain cliffs of sandstone, cumbered with infinite ruins of fallen crags, in whose eternal shadows we built the booths of a day. One of these quarters of rock had not tumbled perhaps in a human generation ; but they mark years of the sun, as the sand, a little thing in the lifetime of the planet.

The short spring season is the only refreshment

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of the desert year. Beasts and men swim upon this prosperous tide ; the cattle have their fill of sweet pasture, butter-milk is in the booths of the Arab ; but there was little or none in Zeyd's tent. The kids and lambs stand all tied, each little neck in a noose, upon a ground line which is stretched in the nomad booth. At day-break the bleating younglings are put under the dams, and each mother receives her own (it is by the scent)—she will put by every other. When the flock is led forth to pasture, the little ones are still bound at home ; for following the dams, they would drink dry the dugs, and leave no food for the Arabs. The worsted tent is full all day of small hungry bleatings, until the ghrannem come home at evening, when they are loosed again, and run to drink, butting under the mother's teats, with their wiggle tails ; and in these spring weeks, there is little rest for their feeble cries, all night in the booths of the Arab : the housewives draw what remains of the sweet-milk after them. The Wáhab tribes of these open highlands are camel-Beduins ; the small cattle are few among them : they have new sprung milk when their hinds have calved. The yeanning camel-cow, lying on her side, is delivered without voice, the fallen calf is big as a grown man : the herdsman stretches out its legs with all his might, and draws the calf, as dead, before the dam. She smells her young, rises and stands upon her feet to lick it over. With a great clap the man's palm upon that horny sole, *zóra* (which, like a pillar, Nature had set under the camel's breast, to bear up the huge back), the calf revives : at three hours' end, yet feeble and tottering, and after many falls, it is

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able to stand reaching up the long neck and feeling for the mother's teat. The next morrow this new-born camel will follow to the field with the dam. The cow may be milked immediately, but that which is drawn from her for a day or two is purgative. The first voice of the calf is a sheep-like complaint, *bâh-bâh*, loud and well sounding. The fleece is silken soft, the head round and high ; and this with a short body, borne arch-wise, and a leaping gait upon so long legs, makes that, a little closing the eyes, you might take them for fledglings of some colossal bird. Till twelve months be out they follow the teat ; but when a few weeks old they begin, already, to crop for themselves the tops of the desert bushes : and their necks being not yet of proportionate reach, it is only betwixt the straddled fore legs that they can feed at the ground. One evening, as I stroked the soft woolly chines of the new-born camels, " Khalil ! said the hind (coming with a hostile face), see thou do no more so—they will be hide-bound and not grow well ; thou knowest not this ! " He thought the stranger was about some maleficence ; but Zeyd, whose spirit was far from all superstition, with an easy smile appeased him, and they were his own camels.

The camel calf at the birth is worth a real, and every month rises as much in value. In some " weak " households the veal is slaughtered, where they must drink themselves all their camel milk. The bereaved dam wanders, lowing softly, and smelling for her calf ; and as she mourns, you shall see her deer-like pupils, say the Arabs, " standing full of tears." Other ten days and her brutish distress is gone over to forgetfulness ;

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she will feed again full at the pasture, and yield her foster milk to the Arab. Then three good pints may be drawn from her at morning, and as much to their supper: the udder of these huge frugal animals is not greater than I have seen the dugs of Malta goats. A milch cow with the calf is milked only at evening. Her udder has four teats, which the southern nomads divide thus: two they tie up with a worsted twine and wooden pegs, for themselves, the others they leave to the suckling. The Arab of the north make their camel udders sure with a worsted bag-netting. Upon a journey, or when she is thirsting, the nâga's milk is lessened to the half. All their nâgas give not milk alike. Whilst the spring milk is in, the nomads nourish themselves of little else. In poorer households it is all their victual those two months. The Beduins drink no whole-milk, save that of their camels; of their small cattle they drink but the butter-milk. The hareem make butter, busily rocking the (blown) sour milk-skin upon their knees. In the plenteous northern wilderness the semîly is greater; and is hanged to be rocked in the fork of a robust bearing-stake of the nomad tent. As for this milk-diet, I find it, by proof in the Beduin life, to be the best of human food. But in every nomad menzil, there are some stomachs, which may never well bear it; and strong men using this sliding drink-meat feel always an hungry disease in their bodies; though they seem in never so good plight. The Beduins speak thus of the several kinds of milk: "Goat milk is sweet, it fattens more than strengthens the body; ewe's milk very sweet, and fattest of all, it is unwholesome

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to drink whole : " so they say, " it kills people," that is, with the colic. In spite of their saws, I have many times drunk it warm from the dug, with great comfort of languishing fatigue. It is very rich in the best samn ; ewe butter-milk " should be let sour somehow in the semîly, with other milk, till all be tempered together, and then it is fit to drink." Camel milk is they think the best of all sustenance, and that most (as lightly purgative) of the *bukkra*, or young nâga with her first calf. . . . The goat and nâga milk savour of the plants where the cattle are pastured ; in some cankered grounds I have found it as wormwood. One of those Allayda sheykhs called to me in the ráhla, " Hast thou not some Damascus *kaak* (biscuit cakes) to give me to eat ? wellah, it is six weeks since I have chewed anything with the teeth ; all our food is now this flood of milk. Seest thou not what is the Beduins' life ; they are like game scattered in all the wilderness." Another craved of me a handful of dates ; " with this milk, only, he felt such a creeping hunger within him." Of any dividing food with them the Beduins keep a kindly remembrance ; and when they have aught will call thee heartily again.

*Arabia Deserta.* 1888.

## XIV

T. E. LAWRENCE

### War in the Desert

NOON brought a fresh care. Through my powerful glasses we saw a hundred Turkish soldiers issue from Mudowwara Station and make straight across the sandy plain towards our place. They were coming very slowly, and no doubt unwillingly, for sorrow at losing their beloved midday sleep: but at their very worst marching and temper they could hardly take more than two hours before they reached us.

We began to pack up, preparatory to moving off, having decided to leave the mine and its leads in place on chance that the Turks might not find them, and we be able to return and take advantage of all the careful work. We sent a messenger to our covering party on the south, that they should meet us farther up, near those scarred rocks which served as screen for our pasturing camels.

Just as he had gone, the watchman cried out that smoke in clouds was rising from Hallat Ammar. Zaal and I rushed uphill and saw by its shape and volume that indeed there must be a train waiting in that station. As we were trying

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to see it over the hill, suddenly it moved out in our direction. We yelled to the Arabs to get into position as quick as possible, and there came a wild scramble over sand and rock. Stokes and Lewis, being booted, could not win the race ; but they came well up, their pains and dysentery forgotten.

The men with rifles posted themselves in a long line behind the spur running from the guns past the exploder to the mouth of the valley. From it they would fire directly into the derailed carriages at less than one hundred and fifty yards, whereas the ranges for the Stokes and Lewis guns were about three hundred yards. An Arab stood up on high behind the guns and shouted to us what the train was doing—a necessary precaution, for if it carried troops and detrained them behind our ridge we should have to face about like a flash and retire fighting up the valley for our lives. Fortunately it held on at all the speed the two locomotives could make on wood fuel.

It drew near where we had been reported, and opened random fire into the desert. I could hear the racket coming, as I sat on my hillock by the bridge to give the signal to Salem, who danced round the exploder on his knees, crying with excitement, and calling urgently on God to make him fruitful. The Turkish fire sounded heavy, and I wondered with how many men we were going to have affair, and if the mine would be advantage enough for our eighty fellows to equal them. It would have been better if the first electrical experiment had been simpler.

However, at that moment the engines, looking very big, rocked with screaming whistles into view



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around the bend. Behind them followed ten box-wagons, crowded with rifle-muzzles at the windows and doors ; and in little sand-bag nests on the roofs Turks precariously held on, to shoot at us. I had not thought of two engines, and on the moment decided to fire the charge under the second, so that however little the mine's effect, the uninjured engine should not be able to uncouple and drag the carriages away.

Accordingly, when the front " driver " of the second engine was on the bridge, I raised my hand to Salem. There followed a terrific roar, and the line vanished from sight behind a spouting column of black dust and smoke a hundred feet high and wide. Out of the darkness came shattering crashes and long, loud metallic clangings of ripped steel, with many lumps of iron and plate ; while one entire wheel of a locomotive whirled up suddenly black out of the cloud against the sky, and sailed musically over our heads to fall slowly and heavily into the desert behind. Except for the flight of these, there succeeded a deathly silence, with no cry of men or rifle-shot, as the now grey mist of the explosion drifted from the line towards us, and over our ridge until it was lost in the hills.

In the lull, I ran southwards to join the sergeants. Salem picked up his rifle and charged out into the murk. Before I had climbed to the guns the hollow was alive with shots, and with the brown figures of the Beduin leaping forward to grips with the enemy. I looked round to see what was happening so quickly, and saw the train stationary and dismembered along the track, with its wagon sides jumping under the bullets which

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riddled them, while Turks were falling out from the far doors to gain the shelter of the railway embankment.

As I watched, our machine-guns chattered out over my head, and the long rows of Turks on the carriage roofs rolled over, and were swept off the top like bales of cotton before the furious shower of bullets which stormed along the roofs and splashed clouds of yellow chips from the planking. The dominant position of the guns had been an advantage to us so far.

When I reached Stokes and Lewis the engagement had taken another turn. The remaining Turks had got behind the bank, here about eleven feet high, and from cover of the wheels were firing point-blank at the Beduin twenty yards away across the sand-filled dip. The enemy in the crescent of the curving line were secure from the machine-guns ; but Stokes slipped in his first shell, and after a few seconds there came a crash as it burst beyond the train in the desert.

He touched the elevating screw, and his second shot fell just by the trucks in the deep hollow below the bridge where the Turks were taking refuge. It made a shambles of the place. The survivors of the group broke out in a panic across the desert, throwing away their rifles and equipment as they ran. This was the opportunity of the Lewis gunners. The sergeant grimly traversed with drum after drum, till the open sand was littered with bodies. Mushagraf, the Sherari boy behind the second gun, saw the battle over, threw aside his weapon with a yell, and dashed down at speed with his rifle to join the others who were beginning, like wild beasts, to

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tear open the carriages and fall to plunder. It had taken nearly ten minutes.

I looked up-line through my glasses and saw the Mudowwara patrol breaking back uncertainly towards the railway to meet the train-fugitives running their fastest northward. I looked south, to see our thirty men cantering their camels neck and neck in our direction to share the spoils. The Turks there, seeing them go, began to move after them with infinite precaution, firing volleys. Evidently we had a half-hour respite, and then a double threat against us.

I ran down to the ruins to see what the mine had done. The bridge was gone; and into its gap was fallen the front wagon, which had been filled with sick. The smash had killed all but three or four, and had rolled dead and dying into a bleeding heap against the splintered end. One of those yet alive deliriously cried out the word typhus. So I wedged shut the door, and left them there, alone.

Succeeding wagons were derailed and smashed: some had frames irreparably buckled. The second engine was a blanched pile of smoking iron. Its driving wheels had been blown upward, taking away the side of the fire-box. Cab and tender were twisted into strips, among the piled stones of the bridge abutment. It would never run again. The front engine had got off better: though heavily derailed and lying half-over, with the cab burst, yet its steam was at pressure, and driving-gear intact.

*Seven Pillars of Wisdom.*

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## XV

### CECIL FOSTER

#### Open Boats in the Indian Ocean

THE observation at noon showed that we had passed, and were slightly to the north of the parallel of latitude 19 deg. 55 min. S., along which I had agreed with Mr. Smith to sail, in order to reach the Mauritius group, and accordingly our course was altered to west true.

This was to be our course until we made a land-fall, but naturally, wind and weather and the difficulty of judging from the sun and stars the exact direction to be steered, caused us to run to the north or south of it at times, so that the actual course steered was but seldom due west.

Sometimes the boat must have presented a motley appearance, for whenever the weather was fine enough we were all in various stages of undress. Articles of clothing of every description would be lying about in the boat where they could catch the rays of the sun or find a little bit of breeze to dry them, and others would be hanging from the backstays and around the mast. The effect was not exactly decorative, but we were very glad if at the end of the day when we put the things on again they were only damp.

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We had a platform of lifebelts in the bottom of the boat on the port side, in the section kept free for baling, to place the tins of biscuits on, as this appeared to be the place where they would be least subject to damage. In spite of this, however, and although the greatest care was taken, they all got very much battered. A lurch of the boat and the man who was baling might be thrown against them, or the same thing might happen while the rations were being passed along, or again when men tried to take up the best positions for catching rain water. It was not much wonder that these tins suffered and that we lost a considerable amount of biscuits. The damage to the biscuits was caused by the sea water getting into the tins.

During the battering these tins got, the edges of some of them were started, in some cases not sufficiently to be apparent to us until we came to open them, and we always opened the most battered-looking first. We were unable to keep them covered, for the only covering in the boat, the canvas boat cover which had been mentioned before, was wanted, especially at night, to give some degree of shelter to and keep the life in the men.

One of the accidents of this eventful voyage cost us dear. Two or three days after leaving the ship, in hammering up the screw-cap of one of the biscuit tanks, the screw-cap broke away, making this tank no longer air- or water-tight. The biscuits from it had to be used first, and we packed as many as possible into the other biscuit tank, which was kept till the last. If that tank had not been damaged, we could have refilled it from the tins and should probably have lost very little or none of our stock. We had to pay

## OPEN BOATS IN THE INDIAN OCEAN

a pretty big price for the little bit of extra energy used in hammering up that screw-cap, but as things turned out the loss of the biscuits did not materially affect our condition.

When issuing the water ration the greatest care was always taken that no spray would get into the bung-hole of the water breaker, which was open at the time. The bungs always had a piece of cloth round them to make them fit tight, and some one was always sitting by the breaker ready to put the bung in or cover the bung-hole as soon as there was any sign of spray coming over. On one occasion, when the weather was very bad and the spray was continually lashing across the boat, we dropped the sail and lay to while the rations was being issued, and we did not consider the time wasted, for the loss of even a pint of our precious fresh water would have been a calamity.

This fourteenth day was mostly spent in drying our clothes in the sun, and rubbing sore feet with storm oil, but using the oil sparingly. Some of the crew suffered a lot from pain in the feet, which was probably caused by defective circulation of the blood in them, and these experienced great relief from rubbing their feet with oil. This was another bit of useful knowledge that I had gained in my previous boating excursion, when we all suffered considerably from frostbite or "trench feet." My feet on that previous occasion had swollen until they were large round balls, and I believe it was due to my rubbing them with oil, and to the time I spent chafing them with my hands, that I was saved from losing toes, as a good many did on that occasion.

In addition to rubbing our feet with oil we

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warmed them as much as we could in the sun, and occasionally gave them a good rubbing. Except that our feet were swollen and very tender for a good while afterwards, we suffered no after-effects in this respect. Some of the crew were suffering from salt-water boils.

On this day, too, I was about to throw overboard a small dressing-case, now reduced almost to pulp from being continually saturated with water, into which I had put some biscuits which had previously been damaged by sea water, when T. Gomez (fireman) thought he would like the case for future use (!!!). I gave it to him and told him to throw out the contents. In cleaning these out he discovered a comb, buttonhook, and nail file, which he washed and passed aft, thinking they would be more useful to me than to him. The comb was put into immediate use and handed round to all in the boat, every one using it, and thoroughly enjoying the sprucing up. It was particularly pleasant to get the salt out of our hair.

This dressing-case and the suit-case previously mentioned had been filled with clothes on leaving the *Trevessa*, and the contents proved very welcome to those who left the ship scantily clad, and would have suffered very severely from the cold without the extra covering I was able to provide.

Another leather case, containing certain ship's papers and the men's discharge books, was small enough to be placed in the locker in the stern of the boat, and also proved valuable as a repository for small personal belongings and papers which the men entrusted to my care.

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June 18—

Fresh S.E. trades and high sea. Carrying on under same conditions. Still a bit squally, but sky looking better. Hope will have more moderate trades. Could make better progress with less sea. Had a much better night than last night. No one sleeping much. Not much room to kick about. All hands pretty well battered. Lips cracked previously, but have healed up since we had the heavy rain. Mouth still horrible with white slime.

8 a.m.—Issued milk and biscuit ration. Had a bad headache for the last twenty-four hours, but easing off a bit now.

Noon.—Lat. 19 deg. 41 min. S. Made course W. true. Issued milk ration. Forenoon strong S.E. trades and rough sea. Making good headway. Afternoon weather moderating. Strong S.E. trades but much less sea. Making good progress west true.

4 p.m.—Issued milk ration.

5 p.m.—Weather moderating. Shook out goosewings. Single reef now. Doing well.

11 p.m.—Fierce squall, dropped sail (catching rain). Steering before wind and sea under bare pole.

11.30 p.m.—Squall passed. Up sail and proceeded. To-day had all rowlocks removed and passed aft.

By the fifteenth day all hands were very much the worse for wear, but sticking it well except for the two who eventually died. We all seemed to be wearing very much alike, but I was very much afraid that a few of the less robust of the crew would collapse suddenly. My headache was due to my eyes, and caused by constantly looking at the sun while I was steering, in order to keep it on the proper bearing for making a good course.

It will be noticed that every time we were caught in a squall we dropped the sail. There were various reasons for doing this, the most



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important of all being that everybody in the boat could devote their whole time to catching rain water. Had we kept the sail up, one man's whole attention would have been required, standing by the halyards, and others might have got in the way of the sheet and impeded whoever was handling the boat. Moreover, we could not afford to take very big risks with the gear. Our case was a proposition altogether different from sailing the boat in a race, when there would be other crews all round to render assistance in case of an accident happening. What caused us the greatest concern throughout was the shortage of fresh water. Had any serious accident happened to the boat we might have had our fresh water spoilt by sea water getting into it, if nothing worse, and what would have been our position if we had suffered serious damage to the mast or sail? The reviving effect of the rain water caught was well worth the sacrifice of the few miles we lost in distance while the sail was down and we were catching it.

The value of this water cannot be estimated by any except those who have had to go without it for a long time. In addition to the reviving effect it had upon us all, we wanted it badly to clean our mouths, which had been for some time thickly coated all round with white slime. The amount of water we obtained from time to time, even when it had been raining heavily, was never sufficient to do this thoroughly, or else the slime formed again so quickly that we were never entirely free of it. We spent quite a lot of time trying to get rid of it, and could scrape it easily off the tongue, and at times some even tried washing their mouths

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with salt water. All were strongly advised not to do this, as the temptation to swallow some of the cool water when it was in the mouth would be very hard to resist.

The rowlocks were passed aft so that no weapons, or anything that could be used as a weapon, were left about the boat, except a couple of sheath knives and a small marlin-spike with the A.B.'s. I had this done merely as a precaution, and in order to be quite on the safe side, though all hands were quite cheerful and keeping perfect discipline.

*June 19—*

*Midnight to 4 a.m.*—Frequent fierce short squalls. Dropped sail during the squalls and steered before wind and sea under bare pole. All hands catching rain water.

*4 a.m. to 8 a.m.*—Not much wind, but sea rising. Steep sea and squally weather. Light breeze between squalls. Sail reefed and goose-winged. Not making much headway between squalls.

*8 a.m.*—Issued milk and biscuit ration. During forenoon strong S.E. trades and rough sea. Weather looking considerably better. Not squally. Sky clear.

*Noon.*—Lat. 19 deg. 56 min. S. Issued milk ration. Afternoon strong S.E. trades and rough sea, making about W.S.W. true. Hope will make land soon. Not very satisfactory that we can't work up a position. We are on a latitude and will have to exercise patience till we have run it down to Rodriguez Island. If we could only have less sea so that we could put a bigger press of the sail on. Too risky as it is. The mast is none too safe. The heel has been lashed and shored up since the first day sailing. The tiller head was broken about the same time and that is lashed up, and the compass is useless. All the steering has been by sun and stars.

*4 p.m.*—Issued milk ration. Should see something soon. Hope so.

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10 *p.m.*—Fierce squall. Dropped sail and steered before the wind and sea—bare pole.

10.30 *p.m.*—Squall passed. Up sail and proceeded.

11 *p.m.*—Fierce squall. Dropped sail. Rough sea.

One of the things about which very little has been said hitherto was our stock of matches. It took us several days to learn that these would have to be very carefully nursed, but the lesson was learnt in time. To start with, several of us each had a box in our pockets, but with the soakings we got these boxes soon fell to pieces and the matches were spoilt. We were very lucky though that on the whole we lost very few of the matches. For the rest of the journey the only man who carried any matches in his pocket was Mr. Fair, who has a water-tight metal box, and another box was kept handy inside a cigarette tin. Great care was taken, too, in the way we used them, and it is wonderful how many lights you could get from one match. One match would light cigarettes for all cigarette smokers, who were in the majority, and one match, too, would light three pipes. We managed this by getting one pipe well alight and inverting it over another and drawing on the two together, perhaps tapping a little of the lighted tobacco into the second one. The same process was gone through for the third. It will be seen that in this way we could light an indefinite number of pipes from the one match, but all these operations had to be performed under the shelter of the canvas.

On the sixteenth day the condition of the two firemen, M. Nagi and Jacob Ali, caused great anxiety. Efforts were made to liven them up, but with very little success. The continued soaking

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with salt water and also with rain, and the cold they necessarily suffered, was too much for them in their weakened condition.

Owing to the continued drenchings, and the fact that the above two men were now very ill, all hands were very quiet, but still optimistic as to reaching land. We were now coming to the hardest part of the struggle, and it was a case of the survival of the fittest, not in the sense of every man for himself, but, though all were working together and a cheery word was always met with a smile, it was clear that it would be the physically and mentally fittest who would come through best.

The gradual failing of the men's strength was apparent as time went on in the amount of effort required in handling the sail. To start with, when the sheave was in good running order and the men were fresh, it was a comparatively easy task for one man to haul the sail up. Later on several men were needed to do it, and during the last few days after June 21, with the additional handicap of a dead sheave for the halyards to be pulled over, it required as many men as could lay on to the halyards. It was more their weight than their strength in pulling that got the sail up at all.

For the last two days baths had been discontinued. In our weakened state the weather seemed to us to be bitterly cold, much too cold for us to strip. We, however, still continued pouring water over our heads with the dipper.

*1700 Miles in Open Boats. 1924.*

## XVI

ASHLEY GIBSON

### Gems

WE see to it in Ceylon that the ancient craft and mystery of pearling does not belie its name. Few outsiders know exactly where the banks are, and certainly we put up no beacons to encourage the inquisitive. A fishery happens when it happens, and that is all about it. It is generally understood that it is up to the official inspector to keep his weather eye open, prowl about the likeliest waters at the due season, which is to say November, lift a sample of at least 20,000 oysters, extract the pearls by the time-honoured process which I shall describe, and have their value assessed by that other ancient rite of the secret hand-clasp, which it should be noted here is the invariable procedure for pricing any gem in Ceylon, and nothing will induce a dealer engaged in any branch of the jewel trade to depart therefrom. No words whatever are exchanged during the business. Buyer and seller, or it may be the two joint assessors, hold each other's paw, cover hands and wrists with a cloth, some kind of masonic inter-communication ensues of which the nature is not apparent to the bystander, and the bargain is made or the price fixed. When a

real transaction is effected, any stranger present has a right to a commission on the proceeds, presumably as the price of his silence.

Obstinately, too, do the pearling fraternity cling to the old Portuguese or Dutch nomenclature throughout the "shop" of their calling. Even the valuations just described are made in terms of the ancient coinage, and have to be reduced to pounds, shillings, and pence by Government. Once a fishery is declared to be worth while, word goes out to the scattered brotherhood of divers, who are assembled to a kind of base-camp and numbered off into two equal bodies. It is exhausting enough work, and a day off and a day on is the rule of the fishery. One-third of each man's daily harvest is the immemorial due of every diver, and the gamble involved is just such as his Eastern soul delights in. Not that he is any pearl of honesty himself. A time-honoured dodge for beating the Government used to be for two men to conspire together, one of them having found a pearl of obvious value, the scheme being that the accomplice stole a small and valueless pearl and hid it, let us say, in his pants. He was then denounced with much vociferation and parade by his friend, the whole labour force stopped work and gathered round, and a tremendous hullabaloo ensued, while in the general confusion the arch-criminal got away well with the real plunder. The staff work here involved is also of a peculiarly Oriental character.

The divers' third share having been allotted, the oysters (pearl-bearing or otherwise, no one knows at present, so the thing still remains a gamble) are dumped straight upon the beach, and

## MODERN TRAVEL

the Government auctions the remaining two-thirds of the catch each evening when the boats come in. Why the State should not continue to direct the whole business nobody knows, but that is the way we have always done the thing in Ceylon. The private buyers bear off their purchases to their own "kottus" or enclosures, and leave them to rot for a week or ten days in a canoe or any large receptacle, shielded from direct sunshine or strong light, but deliberately easy of access to the flies. Not unnaturally, they are not odours of Araby that are wafted from the pearly camps at this stage. Putrefaction being more or less complete, the whole mess is rinsed repeatedly in clean water, miscellaneous rubbish all removed, and the residue left to strain on a black cloth. From now onwards lynx-eyed attention is necessary to avoid wastage. You will observe, for example, the precaution of the black cloth. Again and again the stuff is gone through, and long after the fishery is over and all the genuine pearly folk have departed the wild jungle women of this desolate coast may be observed scratching in the sand for the almost invisible seed-pearls that in bulk are in enormous request on the mainland, alike for the ornamentation of rich embroideries and the supply of *chanum* (powdered lime for betel-chewing) for princes and other very particular people who can afford such extravagances. But only the tiniest seed-pearls escape in this way, all other grades up to the size of an average pea or even larger being graded in colanders which run from the finest sieve-mesh up to a strainer in which there may be twenty apertures within the circumference of an average-sized ash-tray.

## GEMS

I must tell you, too, of the Manduck, who is by way of being an eponymous fraud. One Manduck is allotted to each five divers in a boat, of whom there are ten, who dive and rest alternately. But the Manduck never wets even the sole of his foot. His job it is to work the tackle, to see that all his five sinkers of shapely stone are firmly spliced to the ropes, and that these run freely over the outrigger contrivance which holds them clear of the gunwale. Standing on his stone, the diver takes the biggest breath he is capable of, gives the signal to his Manduck, and that his descent shall be the speedier, heaves himself into the air as the Manduck lets go the rope. When the pressure on the stone ceases the Manduck hauls up again at once, and makes all taut and trim again, for the diver wants no aid on his upward journey.

Thus we did in the days of the Rajavali Chronicle, two thousand five hundred years ago, and precisely thus we do to-day. Steam launches have their uses for examination work and patrols, but in the actual process of oyster collection and the extraction of their precious freight we prefer not to adopt any of your scientific dodges. Some of them have been tried, and failed, European divers, for instance, in full panoply, whom our Tamil and Arab amphibians left standing. The only difference nowadays is that there is no Tamil Princess doing policewoman's duty from a throne at the extremity of Karaitivu Point. Even that might be arranged, only it happens that the last three miles or so of the spit have gradually submerged since the Rajavali epoch, and telescopes, you will understand, are barred.

*Cinnamon and Frangipanni.* 1923.



## XVII

EDMUND CANDLER

### Angkor, a Pilgrimage

BURIED away in the south-east corner of Siam in the Mekong basin, to the north of the inland sea of Tonlé Sap, lie a forgotten city, and a temple, without doubt the greatest and most beautiful in Asia. If the city were known to Englishmen its name would be on all men's tongues, and newspapers would profane it daily, calling all great and mysterious shrines the "Angkor of the West" or the "Angkor of the New World," as the case might be. But it has been spared the metonymic headline, though in France Angkor is a household word.

Nearly ten years ago I made the pilgrimage to Angkor Wat. Landing at Tavoy I struck across the Burmese frontier, travelling by elephant to the Tennasserim River, then down stream in a dug-out canoe as far as Sinbyoodine. Here I left the river and struck west over that picturesque barrier of hills which divides Burma from Siam. Once over the frontier my Karen coolies began to desert, but in spite of their defection, a total ignorance of any language the people of the country could understand, and an equally com-

## ANGKOR, A PILGRIMAGE

plete bankruptcy in the currency of the realm—for the Indian rupees I took with me were not held good—I found myself in a few weeks in Bangkok. A crazy bullock-cart, some dug-out canoes, a sampan, and finally a steam-launch, were implicated in my arrival. I left the capital in a Siamese junk, which deposited me with other undesirables at the little mining port of Chantaboun. Thence north on foot, with coolies for transport, to Phairin, a steamy basin in the hills, rich in sapphires and rubies, but famous for being the most malarious death-trap in the East. From Phairin northward again on horseback over a waterless country to Battambang, whence a sinuous little river of the same name winds into the Tonlé Sap. I followed the stream into the great lake, traversed the north-west corner of it, then up another stream between an avenue of alders, or similar trees, burdened with flocks of brilliant aquatic birds, herons, kingfishers, adjutants, flamingoes, and the like, who watched my progress with attentive tolerance to the village of Siem Rep and the very gates of Angkor.

The journey was rough and devious. But now looking back on it the whole incident has taken a perfectly smooth perspective, like a long green drive in a wood with a glittering shrine at the end. That is Angkor's doing. And though ten years have passed, the image I took away with me has not been, and could not have been, gilded in the interval. I should state this explicitly, for a journey is often born of dreams and in the end reverts into them. The actual experience is a mere interlude; the dreams endure and become in time a very substantial fabric. Yet if we could

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look back on the past with clear eyes and see without illusions all that the alchemy of it has sprinkled over with gold-dust, we might well smile cynically. For, divested of this tinsel, the voyages we dwell upon most fondly have been sometimes the grimmest of pilgrimages. All desert and remote places seem romantic in retrospect, but how many of them held any glamour when our ego and its needs were the centre and focus of them, when the immediate care was a dinner or transport for to-morrow?

And this glow that illumines so warmly the places won with the greatest toil in our huddled and confused memories of voyaging, like the sun lightening the highest peaks of a tumbled mountain chain, is not a phenomenon peculiar to travel, but a part of all experience. Everything acted and done with is transmuted by it, the more fondly as the severance is more complete.

So it is not safe to review with any finality these wanderings beyond the outposts of civilization, and to say this place or the other was a paradise to end one's days in. For the figure of the sun on the mountains is true throughout. At day-break the snow-peaks are rose-tinted—that is, one grasps at a journey with eager hope. And in the day itself, be it bright or dull, there is the searching reality. Then at twilight this is all swept away and once more the peaks are rose-coloured, suffused with the glow of this alchemist, artist, optimist god, who transfigures everything except the instant "Now."

But briefly the origin of travel is dreams. One is restless and toys with maps, one dreams dreams, takes some practical step and is committed. Some

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men are content to let their visions pass into the air like wreaths of smoke. Others, the fanatics of travel, are lured by them impulsively; they tread buoyantly these airy citadels. But to take a step to meet them is to accept their challenge; after that there is no turning back. It is as if one had made a vow to a saint to build a shrine or make a pilgrimage in consideration of some reprieve. It may be, to be delivered from the haunts of men similar to oneself, to be projected from this common place to that unknown and presumably desirable one. But whenever it be, the vow is binding to most honest fellows, who, sooner than they think, feel the flints grow sharp about their feet, and find that the only joy in the pilgrimage is the fierce exaltation of seeing it through.

Nevertheless there are places in the East with a spell to which one must be instantly subject, places which can gain little from the alchemy I have spoken of. Hitt is one of these and Hilleh; and there are Kenham and Lhasa and Pharijong and Kanburi, and many other strange and hidden places I could call to mind. But on me, as no doubt on any other white man who has seen it, Angkor Wat has exercised a greater spell than any place on earth. So that whenever I read of, or hear any casual talk of the "call," "mystery," or "fascination" of the East, I see Angkor at once with its deserted terraces and causeways and its extraordinary unimaginable secret, a splendid brave old ruin, showing no traces of any human meddling for the last thousand years, but fighting inch by inch its grim interminable battle of twenty centuries with the forest trees.

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And who could help being haunted by that slow-moving epic of which the protagonists are so Titanic, Angkor, and the sacred Ficus—Angkor, superb and aloof, with its incommunicable glories, a desolate survival of some great unexplained energies that have vanished from the earth ; and the Ficus tree, the shadows of whose branches, arched and embossed like a cathedral, have caressed the shrine for centuries, while its roots have spread their slow and secret ruin ? There are no witnesses of the struggle save the wild things and one or two sleepy priests ; and the movement is so slow that one feels there can be no rancour in it, for nothing animate or conscious, unless it be the wild elephants, can live long enough to mark any new victory to the destroyer. I like to feel, rather, that the Ficus has been visited on Angkor, and the caress of its shadow and the caress of its roots are such inveterate associations, so dear to the lonely genius of the place, that the coming of any other agent of dissolution would be as distressing to Angkor as to its votaries.

But I am dreaming, and if I am not cautious may be taken for a romancer in spite of my care to show how thoroughly on my guard I am against those refining snares of the memory that trick us so often into bearing false witness. I am too earnest a votary of Angkor not to resent any suggestion of additions ; exaggeration would be as hateful as a tawdry modern flag hung on the battlements. I only wish to make it clear that while I was at Angkor I was then and there devoted to the place, and that no after visions have haloed round that first image ; that as my

## ANGKOR, A PILGRIMAGE

feet were echoing on its age-worn flagstones I was feeling all the while, "This is Angkor, a dream city, the most mysterious and vaguely eloquent place on earth": not "Is this Angkor—is this all?"

I slept in the ruins two moonlight nights. Directly the sun sank innumerable bats swept along the corridors with a rushing sound like a great wind. The smell of them was like some foetid incense to age and decay. Then when they were still I could hear the gentle stir of the palm leaves inside the walls. The moon had silvered them, and their rustle through some subtle fancy seemed softly metallic. Now and again an owl wailed hideously from a tree by the moat. I was once startled by a priest, seeing him before hearing him. The quiet old man glided with noiseless feet like a shadow. He lit a taper before a wooden image of Buddha, a thing perhaps not more than a hundred years old, part of the parasite worship of the place. He passed me without word or look; even in daylight I was a thing outside his contemplation. Then there were other noises, sounds without reason. I feared snakes. Surely the sacred cobra must coil here at night in the cool passages, where the Naga was revered centuries before the birth of Christ, where his image in stone, hood erect, guards the entrance of every sacred place.

By the main causeway, there was a bamboo *zayat* for pilgrims, where I, the most enduring of them, if miles traversed are held for merit, had cast my profane chattels. Here I turned to sleep, but lay half awake for hours spellbound, haunted by that fancy of the day, feeling that all round

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me the silent ceaseless battle was being waged, and seeming to hear some faint labouring of the stones, the gripping of the Titans, Angkor, and the sacred Ficus.

And surely there is nothing outside Milton's theme that is comparable in measure or import with this epic. What are the struggles of nations, conquest by the sword, sovereignty, subjection, throes of onset, beside the slow eternal wave of destiny symbolized here, that immutable indifferent void, that in-drawing arc of oblivion which closes impartially on all strife and has numbered the years of the sun.

At Angkor one can measure the encroachment more distinctly than is possible in countries which we call civilized, where small happenings as wars and revolutions distract us from universal truths. Here written and sculptured on the walls we can read the record of man's pride, how five hundred years before the birth of Christ Prea-thong, son of the sovereign of Indrapat, now Delhi, revolted against his father, was defeated, and banished; then with his army of followers broke across the Southern continent, devastated, destroyed, created, and was only checked in his eastward course by the marshes of the Mekong Valley and the Tonlé Sap. Here he conquered the Khomen, the then inhabitants of the country, and with them became merged in that extraordinary race which we now call the Kmers. But these Hindus, before the national type became assimilated and lost in this new race-blend, built the city of Angkor, and the temple which they dedicated to Siva, the destroyer, figuring him in their ignorance with thunderbolts and eyes of flame like a malignant

## ANGKOR, A PILGRIMAGE

fury, not understanding that shocks and violence are the least terrible energies of destruction. Yet perhaps if these old Brahmins could return and see this Angkor which they built and consecrated to one destroyer, crumbling at the hands of another, they might fashion a new god ; and the Siva that the wisdom of the twentieth century would create might be more awful than the other, menacing with no penalties by which any imaginable evils could be expiated, but passive as Buddha, relentless and expressionless as the illimitable void.

But this Siva without fangs, the unseen impalpable destroyer, would be a conception to paralyse all effort. So that if the Kmers had any presentment of such a god they would not have built Angkor ; or they would have built it sadly, knowingly, without pride, as one might say, " Accept this our offering, the monument of our littleness. For even this Angkor, the work of a race, the labour of centuries, is as a grain of chaff to be swept away at thy nod."

But that was not the spirit of these Aryan invaders, whose gods fought by their side, drove chariots, and were as intimately involved in the national campaigns as those of Troy. Humility in the East is a Buddhist growth, and it was not until the philosophy of Sakya Muni penetrated to the Tonlé Sap that the building of Angkor was checked. Five hundred years after the birth of Christ, when the work was completed, it seems, save for the chiselling of a single pillar, the sacred Buddhist books were introduced into Cambodia from Ceylon and the temple was given over to the new cult. With the new influence the religious



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aspirations of the Kmers were idealized, they were filled with a sense of the pervading vanity of things, and the motive of this monumental labour vanished. For it is only among proudly materialized races like the Egyptians, Aztecs, Assyrians, and ancient Hindus that these mountains of elaborate architecture have been raised.

Angkor then owes little to the Buddhists save that their tolerance has left the great temple nearly intact. It is strange to think that these ministers of gentle faith, whose only prayer is peace and the realization of the sanctity of life, have passed to their devotions so many years along these cloisters, where every inch of wall pictures a riot of carnage—Rama and Hanuman drawing bows, slashing swords, thrusting savagely with knives, in the wildest fury of hate, or kings going out to war with chariots and horses and legions of footmen, and drawing in their train everything frightful or noble among beasts—elephant, horse, ox, crocodile, and rhinoceros—three thousand feet of intricate figures inexorably devoted to the pride of conquest. For this place, so peaceful and remote, is haunted more than any other place on earth with the sense of dead strife, titanic labourings to no lasting purpose, it seems, save a casual holocaust of human lives. And to-day, while a few passive devotees dream away their lives in this *milieu*, the Hindus who conceived it all, concerning themselves in their brief existence only with the engines of terrorism and death, have passed away from the face of the earth, leaving no trace of their influence on the races who absorbed them.

With these epic fragments in my head and con-

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fused moralisings I fell asleep, a huddled anachronism, on the *zayat* floor; and after a few hours' dreaming rose with the sun to seize a last glimpse of the temple before setting out to explore the crumbling palaces scattered around in the jungle—Bapuan, Bayon, Pimean-Acas—all that remains of Angkor-Thôm, the capital of this lost race. I climbed the outer staircase—inner there was none—on to the third terrace where the three great pagodas dominate the encroaching forest. Below me lay the second and third terraces, cloistered courts with innumerable monolithic pillars, open within to the light of day, every passage a vaulted gallery of bas-reliefs with image-houses scattered symmetrically to north and south. Then beyond, the great enclosure choked with palm-trees, intersected with raised causeways of flagstone, with shrines on either side, sacristies perhaps, or buildings dedicated to some special rite. All this ringed by an outer wall, a mile or more of masonry surmounting a broad moat, rank with lotus and frequented by coot and whistling teal.

The main causeway leads through the western gate across a bridge that spans the moat. Through this I passed to Angkor-Thôm, where all this grandeur is repeated in fragments. The city is scattered over miles. One breaks through a thicket and comes upon a wall of bas-relief. A king with helmet, sword, and corselet is being drawn in a triumphal car; a tortoise is swimming in a lake; a divinity holds out a lotus flower. One looks up and meets the gaze of a huge Brahmanic face in haut-relief, intact though draped with creepers and parasites.

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Then one stumbles against a massive gateway through which elephants have passed to war; gross shapes of warriors peep above the lintel; on either side of the porch are stone chambers where stood the guard. The gate is topped by a pagoda-tower with progressively decreasing layers, richly ornamented, every ledge culminating in the sacred Naga, seven-headed, fan-shaped, hood erect, or the eagle of Vishnu, man-headed and intertwined with serpents. Here a troupe of demons afflict the damned. There the immense serpent forms a balustrade supported by squat bowmen. The elephant head of Ganesh sleeps under a green canopy. No one has bent the knee to that worthy old forgotten god for the last thousand years.

Then as one strains through the thick tropical tangle one may come upon an unexpected village. A tinkling cow-bell, or the drone of some sleepy herdsman, may reveal it nearer than one thought. Here is the path, rank with the aromatic *Lantana*. A few steps and one finds a scene that compels moralising. For to-day when the Cambodian builds a house he drives four piles into the earth, or perhaps six or eight, not more, and stretches across them a bamboo floor. This, with four walls and a slanting roof, also of bamboo, completes his architectural ambition—a draughty cowshed on stilts. Villages built in this way stand among the ruins of the ancient Kmers. No wonder, then, the natives say Angkor was built by the gods. We ourselves are not so immeasurably wiser, though in Paris the Musée Kmer is devoted to the lost civilization, and the Frenchmen, Abel Remusat, Mouhot, Doudard de Lagrée,

## ANGKOR, A PILGRIMAGE

Garnier, Delaporte, Barth, Aumonier, and Fourneau, have written volumes on the subject.

I should explain that my own journey was the harum-scarum adventure of a boy who knew nothing about architecture or ethnology or Asiatic lore, but was simply captured by the glamour of the thing. Notes and investigations! I took none, made none, never dreamed of making any! Intelligent inquiry, I confess, would have bored me. Mouhot I had read cursorily, and attributed his amazing flow of rhetoric to "the Frenchman's way." But when I reached London I spent some days at the British Museum, and was amazed to find that Angkor had been measured with a foot-rule.

At first I resented it. And unreasonably, you may well say. For being jealous of the shrine, I ought to have understood that my own inarticulate wonder and dreamy reverence were poor offerings beside this man's foot-rule and notebook. Supposing we both wished to spread the cult of Angkor, were both missionaries in a sense, as most men wish to be who cherish any incommunicable vision. And supposing we were questioned about Angkor by an unbeliever. I could only gape and babble of a miracle, while the other would be quoting chapter and verse. I can imagine the catechism.

"And is the temple of this god you mention very great? Is it as great as St. Paul's?"

I could only stammer, "Vastly greater. From end to end is farther than the stoutest archer could send an arrow."

But the wise votary would say:

"The causeway which leads to the main en-

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trance of the temple is 725 feet in length, and is paved with stones measuring four feet in length and two in breadth. The outer wall, about half a mile square, is built of sandstone, with gateways upon each side, which are handsomely carved with gods and dragons, arabesques and intricate scrolls. Upon the western side is the main gateway, and passing through this, and up a causeway for a distance of a thousand feet, you arrive at the main entrance of the temple. The foundations of Angkor Wat are ten feet in height, and massively built of volcanic rock. The entire edifice, which is raised on three terraces, the one about thirty feet above the other, including the roof, is of stone, but without cement, and so closely fitting are the joints as even now to be scarcely discernible. The shape of the building is oblong, being 796 feet in length and 588 feet in width, while the highest central pagoda rises some 250 feet above the ground, and four others at the angles of the court are each about 150 feet in height."

Then the unbeliever, impressed, would ask :

" And is the temple of this god beautiful ? Is it sculptured and ornamented like the cathedral of Amiens ? "

Here the impotence of words would be an agony to me. But the man of deeds, now my ally, would be ready with his hard gospel of facts.

" The gallery of sculpture, which forms the exterior of the temple, consists of over half a million of continuous pictures, cut in basso-relievo upon sandstone slabs six feet in width, and representing subjects taken from the Hindu mythology. Entire scenes from the *Ramayana* are pictured, one of which occupies 240 feet of the

## ANGKOR, A PILGRIMAGE

wall. On the walls are sculptured the immense number of 100,000 separate figures."

So I came to treasure these statistics, learnt them by rote, and came in time almost to believe that I had measured Angkor myself. Equipped with this testament I might speak out boldly of the shrine and crush the incredulous with the weight of facts. I remembered the idle curiosity with which I had turned over Mouhot's pages before the pilgrimage, how casually I had listened to his outpourings. "*A la vue de ce temple l'esprit se sent écrasé, l'imagination surpassée,*" he had written, with all moderation as I learnt afterwards, and in the fullness of his heart. But to me the words had seemed vain, the speech of a blind seer, a Nabi; they conjured up nothing save an impatient glimpse of an excited Frenchman. The thought of this injustice made me timid in speaking of Angkor. To others who had not seen my words also might appear vain. I was not more ardent, deserved no better, than this Mouhot who had left me so cynically cold and sceptical. Clearly if I wished any one to believe me I must be more reticent. I would be guarded. Then I discovered the disciple with the foot-rule and had only to say "Amen."

But that was ten years ago. To-day there ought to be no need of proselytising. Do you claim that there is any other shrine half so grand and impressive, listen to the burning words of the pilgrim Garnier and Mouhot. Do you deny that Angkor was the cradle of a race of kings, turn to the bas-reliefs, read the inscriptions in Kmer and Sanscrit translated by the Orientalists Barth and Aumonier. Are you sceptical about the

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splendour, extent, and astonishing beauty of the place, scan the measurements of Vincent, then turn to the sumptuous tomes of Fournereau and Porcher, spread out the hundred plates, and bow the knee converted.

Still, in spite of all this literature and investigation, there is much mystery veiling the history of Angkor which Orientalists have been unable to penetrate. These Kmers were half Hindus, and derived, one might think, their architectural inspirations from Hindu sources. In many respects the designs of Prea-thong and his descendants are identical with those of Hindustan. Yet there are some essential characteristics, the arch and vaulted roof, for instance, which are not traceable to Aryan models. The Kmers owed nothing to China, nor could they have been inspired by the Khomen, the original inhabitants of the land. What then is the origin of these traits? And how are we to account for the extraordinary analogies that Fournereau has traced between the Kmer and the Egyptian temples and the Kmer and Assyrian sculpture and bas-reliefs? That is a secret which the stones of Angkor have not revealed.

Angkor has played me the same trick as it did Mouhot. It has lured me into rhodomontades. I can only babble incoherently of its charm. I have not attempted to describe its architecture. And this is not because I cannot see the shrine and remember, as I think, every stone and curve of it, but because I would have no joy in the task, even if I could succeed. To me the appeal of the place is purely emotional; I have fallen under the spell and wish others to feel its intensity.

## ANGKOR, A PILGRIMAGE

I simply proclaim the pre-eminence of Angkor over all other shrines. I am the Nabi on whom has descended Mouhot's mantle, the muezzin on the tower. Maybe there are folk listening in the street who will hear the call and distinguish in my voice the ring of truth.

*The Mantle of the East.* 1910.



## XVIII

HUGH CLIFFORD

### A Night of Terror

The glaring eyes through the brushwood shine,  
And the striped hide shows between  
The trees and bushes, 'mid trailing vine  
And masses of ever-green.  
A snarling moan comes long and low,  
We may neither flee nor fight,  
For well our leaping pulses know  
The Terror that stalks by Night.

IF you put your finger on the map of the Malay peninsula an inch or two from its exact centre, you will find a river in Pahang territory which has its rise in the watershed that divides that State from Kēlantān and Trěnggānu. This river is called the Těmběling, and it is chiefly remarkable for the number of its rapids and the richness of its gutta-bearing forests. Its inhabitants are a ruffianly lot of Malays, who are preyed upon by a family of *Wans*, a semi-royal set of nobles who do their best to live up to their traditions. Below the rapids the natives are chiefly noted for the quaint pottery that they produce from the clay which abounds there, and the rude shapes and ruder tracery of their vessels have probably suffered no change since the days when Solomon's

## A NIGHT OF TERROR

fleets sought gold and peafowl and monkeys in the jungles of the Peninsula, as everybody knows. Above the rapids the Malays plant enough *gambir* to supply the wants of the whole betel-chewing population of Pahang, and, as the sale of this commodity wins them a few dollars annually, they are too indolent to plant their own rice. This grain, which is the staple of all Malays, without which they cannot live, is therefore sold to them by down-river natives, at the exorbitant price of half a dollar the bushel.

A short distance up-stream, and midway between the mouth and the big rapids, there is a straggling village, called Ranggul, the houses of which, made of wattled bamboos and thatched with palm leaves, stand on piles, amid the groves of cocoa-nut and areca-nut palms, varied by clumps of smooth-leaved banana trees. The houses are not very close together, but a man can call from one to the other with ease; and thus the cocoa-nuts thrive, which, as the Malays say, grow not with pleasure beyond the sound of the human voice. The people of the village are not more indolent than other Malays. They plant a little rice, when the season comes, in the swamps behind the village. They work a little jungle produce, when the pinch of poverty drives them to it, but, like all Malays, they take life sufficiently easily. If you chance to go into the village of Ranggul, during any of the hot hours of the day, you will find most of its occupants lying about in their dark, cool houses, engaged upon such gentle mental tasks as may be afforded by whittling a stick, or hacking slowly at the already deeply scored threshold-block, with their clumsy

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wood-knives. Sitting thus, they gossip with a passing neighbour, who stops to chatter as he sits propped upon the stair ladder, or they croak snatches of song, with some old-world refrain to it, and, from time to time, break off to cast a word over their shoulders to the wife in the dim background near the fireplace, or to the little virgin daughter, carefully secreted on the shelf overhead, in company with a miscellaneous collection of dusty, grimy rubbish, the disused lumber of years. Nature has been very lavish to the Malay, and she has provided him with a soil which returns a maximum of food for a minimum of grudging labour. The cool, moist fruit groves call aloud to all mankind to come and revel in their fragrant shade during the parching hours of midday, and the Malay has caught the spirit of his surroundings, and is very much what Nature has seen fit to make him.

Some five-and-thirty years ago, when Che' Wan Âhmad, now better known as Sultân Âhmad Maâtham Shah, was collecting his forces in Dûngun, preparatory to making his last and successful descent into the Těmběling valley, whence to overrun and conquer Pahang, the night was closing in at Ranggul. A large house stood, at that time, in a somewhat isolated position, within a thickly-planted compound, at one extremity of the village. In this house, on the night of which I write, seven men and two women were at work on the evening meal. The men sat in the centre of the floor, on a white mat made from the plaited leaves of the *měngkûang* palm, with a plate piled with rice before each of them, and a brass tray, holding various little china bowls

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of curry, placed where all could reach it. They sat cross-legged, with bowed backs, supporting themselves on their left arms, the left hand lying flat on the mat, and being so turned that the outspread fingers pointed inwards. With the fingers of their right hands, they messed the rice, mixing the curry well into it, and then swiftly carried a large handful to their mouths, skilfully, without dropping a grain. The women sat demurely, in a half-kneeling position, with their feet tucked away under them, and ministered to the wants of the men. They said never a word, save an occasional exclamation, when they drove away a lean cat that crept too near to the food, and the men also held their peace. There was no sound to be heard, save the hum of the insects out of doors, the deep note of the bull-frogs in the rice swamps, and the unnecessarily loud noise of mastication made by the men as they ate.

When the meal was over the women carried what was left to a corner near the fireplace, and there fell to on such of the viands as their lords had not consumed. If you had looked carefully, however, you would have seen that the cooking-pots, over which the women ruled, still held a secret store for their own consumption, and that the quality of the food in this *cache* was by no means inferior to that which has been allotted to the men. In a land where women wait upon themselves, and have none to attend their wants, or forestall their wishes, they very soon acquire an extremely good notion of how to look after themselves ; and, since they have never known a state of society in which women are treated as they are amongst ourselves, they do not repine, and

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seem, for the most part, to be sufficiently bright, light-hearted, and happy.

The men, meanwhile, had each rolled up a quid of betel-nut, taking the four ingredients carefully from the little brass boxes in the wooden tray before them, and having prepared cigarettes of Javanese tobacco, with the dried shoots of the *nîpah* palm for wrappers, had at length broken the absorbed silence, which had held them fast while the matter of the meal was occupying their undivided attention.

The talk flitted lightly over many subjects ; for a hearty meal, and the peace of soul which repletion brings with it, are not conducive to concentration of attention, nor yet to activity of mind. The Malay, too, is always superficial, and talk among natives generally plays round facts, rather than round ideas. Che' Sëman, the owner of the house, and his two sons, Âwang and Ngah, discussed the prospects of the crop then growing in the fields behind the compound. Their cousin Âbdollah, who chanced to be passing the night in the house, told of a fall which his wife's aunt's brother had come by, when climbing a cocoa-nut tree. Mat, his *bîras* (for they had married two sisters, which established a definite form of relationship between them, according to Malay ideas), added a few more or less ugly details to Âbdollah's description of the corpse after the accident. And as this attracted the attention of the two remaining men, Pôtek and Kassim, who had been discussing the price of rice, and the varying chances of *gětah* hunting, the talk at this point became general. Pôtek and Kassim had recently returned from Dûngun, where, as had been said, the present

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Sultân of Pahang was, at that time, collecting the force with which he afterwards successfully invaded and conquered the State. They told of all they had seen and heard, multiplying their figures with the daring recklessness that is born of unfettered imaginations, and the lack of a rudimentary knowledge of arithmetic. But even this absorbing topic could not hold the attention of the hearers for long. Before Pôtek and Kassim had well finished the enumeration of the heavy artillery, of the thousands of elephants, and the tens of thousands of the followers, with which they credited the adventurous, but slender bands of ragamuffins, who followed Âhmad's fortunes, Che' Sëman broke into their talk with words on a subject which, at that time, was ever uppermost in the minds of the Tëmbëling people, and the conversation straightway drifted into the channel in which it had run, with only casual interruptions, for many weeks past.

"He of the Hairy Face<sup>1</sup> is with us once more," ejaculated Che' Sëman ; and when this announcement had caused a dead silence to fall upon his hearers, and had even stilled the chatter of the women-folk near the fireplace, he continued :

"At the hour when the cicada is heard (sunset), I met Imâm Sîdik of Gëmûroh, and bade him stay to eat rice, but he would not, saying that He of the Hairy Face had made his kill at Lâbu yesterday, and it behoved all men to be within their houses before the darkness fell. And so saying he

<sup>1</sup> *Sî Pûdong*—one of the names used by jungle-bred Malays to describe a tiger. They avoid using the beast's real name lest the sound of it should reach his ears, and cause him to come to the speaker.

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paddled his dug-out down-stream with a short quick stroke used when we race boats. Imâm Sîdik is a wise man, and his words are true. He of the Hairy Face spares neither priest nor prince. The girl he killed at Lâu was a daughter of the *Wans*—her name Wan Ēsah."

"That makes three-and-twenty whom He of the Hairy Face hath slain in one year of maize" (three months), said Âwang in a low fear-stricken voice. "He touches neither goats nor kine, and men say He sucketh more blood than He eateth flesh."

"That it is which proves Him to be the thing He is," said Ngah.

"Thy words are true," said Che' Sěman solemnly. "He of the Hairy Face has his origin in a man. The *Sěmang*—the negrits of the woods—drove him forth from among them, and now he lives solitarily in the jungles, and by night he takes upon himself the form of Him of the Hairy Face, and feasts upon the flesh of his own kind."

"I have heard tell that it is only the men of Korinchi who have this strange power," interposed Ābdollah, in the tone of one who longs to be reassured.

"Men say that they also possess the power," rejoined Che' Sěman, "but certain it is that He of the Hairy Face was born a *Sěmang*—a negrit of the wood—and when He goeth forth in human guise He is like all other *Sěmangs* to look upon. I and many others have seen him, roaming alone, naked, and muttering to himself, when we have been in the forests seeking for jungle produce. All men know that it is He who by night harries us in our villages. If one ventures to go forth

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from our houses in the time of darkness, to the bathing raft at the river's edge, or to tend our sick, or to visit a friend, Si Pûdong is ever to be found watching, and thus the tale of his kills waxes longer and longer."

"But men are safe from him while they sit within their houses?" asked Mat with evident anxiety.

"God alone knows," answered Che' Sëman piously. "Who can say where men are safe from Him of the Hairy Face? He cometh like a shadow, and slays like a prince, and then like a shadow He is gone. And the tale of his kills waxes even longer and yet more long. May God send Him far from us. Ya Allah! It is He! Listen!"

At the word, a dead silence, broken only by the hard breathing of the men and women, fell upon all within the house. Then very faintly, and far away up-stream, but not so faintly but that all could hear it, and shudder at the sound, the long-drawn, howling, snarling moan of a hungry tiger broke upon the stillness. The Malays call the roar of the tiger *äum*, and the word is vividly onomtopœic, as those who have heard the sound in the jungle during the silent night watches can bear witness. All who have listened to the tiger in his forest freedom know that he has many voices wherewith to speak. He can give a barking cry, which is not unlike that of a deer; he can grunt like a startled boar, and speak like the monkeys cowering at his approach in the branches overhead; he can shake the earth with a vibrating, resonant purr, like the sound of faint thunder in the foothills; he can mew and snarl like an angry wild-cat; he can roar like a lusty lion cub. But



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it is when he lifts up his voice in the long-drawn moan that the jungle chiefly fears him. This cry means that he is hungry, and, moreover, that he is so sure of his kill that he cares not if all the world knows that his belly is empty. It has something strangely horrible in its tone, for it speaks of that cold-blooded, dispassionate cruelty which is only to be found in perfection in the feline race. These sleek, smooth-skinned, soft-footed, lithe, almost serpentine animals, torture with a grace of movement, and a gentleness in strength which has something in it more violently repugnant to our natures than any sensation with which the thought of the blundering charge and savage goring of the buffalo, or the clumsy kneading with giant knee-caps, that the elephant metes out to its victims, can ever inspire in us.

Again the long-drawn moaning cry broke upon the stillness. The cattle in the byre heard it and were panic-stricken. Half mad with fear, they charged the walls of their pen, bearing all before them, and in a moment could be heard in the distance plunging madly through the brushwood, and splashing through the soft earth of the *pádi* fields. The dogs whimpered and scampered off in every direction, while the fowls beneath the house set up a drowsy and discordant screeching. The folk within the house were too terror-stricken to speak, for fear, which gives voices to the animal world, renders voluble human beings dumb. And all this time the cry broke forth again and again, ever louder and louder, as He of the Hairy Face drew nearer and yet more near.

At last the cruel whining howl sounded within the very compound in which the house stood, and

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its sudden proximity caused Mat to start so violently that he overturned the pitch torch at his elbow, and extinguished the flickering light. The women crowded up against the men, seeking comfort by physical contact with them, their teeth chattering like castanets. The men gripped their spears, and squatted tremblingly in the half light thrown by the dying embers of the fire, and the flecks cast upon floor and wall by the faint moonbeams struggling through the interstices of the thatched roof.

"Fear nothing, Mīnah," Che' Sēman whispered, in a hoarse, strange voice, to his little daughter, who nestled miserably against his breast, "in a space He will be gone. Even He of the Hairy Face will do us no harm while we sit within the house."

Che' Sēman spoke from the experience of many generations of Malays, but he knew not the nature of the strange beast with whom he had to deal. Once more the moan-like howl broke out on the still night air, but this time the note had changed, and gradually it quickened to the ferocious snarling roar, the charge song, as the tiger rushed forward and leaped against the side of the house with a heavy jarring thud. A shriek from all the seven throats went up on the instant, and then came a scratching, tearing sound, followed by a soft, dull flop, as the tiger, failing to effect a landing on the low roof, fell back to earth. The men started to their feet, clutching their weapons convulsively, and, led by Che' Sēman, they raised, above the shrieks of the frightened women, a lamentable attempt at a *sōrak*, the Malayan war-cry, which is designed

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as much to put heart into those who utter it, as to frighten the enemy in defiance of whom it is sounded.

Mat, the man who had upset the torch and plunged the house in darkness, alone failed to add his voice to the miserable cheer raised by his fellows. Wild with fear of the beast without, he crept, unobserved by the others, up into the *pára*, or shelf-like upper apartment, on which Mînah had been wont to sit, when strangers were about, during the short days of her virginity. This place, as is usual in most Malay houses, hardly deserved to be dignified by being termed a room. It consisted of a platform suspended from the roof in one corner of the house, and among the dusty lumber with which it was covered Mat now cowered and sought to hide himself.

A minute or two of sickening suspense followed the tiger's first unsuccessful charge. But presently the howl broke forth again, quickened rapidly to the note of the charge song, and once more the house trembled under the weight of the great animal. This time the leap of Him of the Hairy Face had been of truer aim, and a crash overhead, a shower of leaflets of thatch, and an ominous creaking of the woodwork told the cowering people in the house that their enemy had effected a landing on the roof.

The miserable thready cheer, which Che' Sēman exhorted his fellows to raise in answer to the charge song of the tiger, died down in their throats. All looked upwards in deadly fascination as the thatch was torn violently apart by the great claws of their assailant. There were no firearms in the house, but the men instinctively

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grasped their spears, and held them ready to await the tiger's descent. Thus for a moment, as the quiet moonlight poured in through the gap in the thatch, they stood gazing at the great square face, marked with its black bars, at the flaming eyes, and the long, cruel teeth framed in the hole which the claws of the beast had made. The timbers of the roof bent and cracked anew under the unwonted weight, and then, with the agility of a cat, He of the Hairy Face leaped lightly down, and was among them before they knew. The striped hide was slightly wounded by the spears, but the shock of the brute's leap bore all who had resisted it to the floor. The tiger never stayed to use its jaws. It sat up, much in the attitude of a kitten which plays with something dangled before its eyes, and the soft pit-pat of its paws, as it struck out rapidly and with unerring aim, speedily disposed of all its enemies. Che' Sëman, with his two sons, Äwang and Ngah, were the first to fall. Then Iang, Che' Sëman's wife, reeled backwards against the wall, with her skull crushed out of all resemblance to any human member, by the awful strength of one of those well-aimed buffets from the fearful claws. Kassim, Pôtek, and Äbdollah fell before the tiger in quick succession, and Mînah, the girl who had nestled against her father for protection, lay now under his dead body, sorely wounded, wild with terror, but still alive and conscious. Mat, cowering on the shelf overhead, breathless with fear, and gazing fascinated at the carnage going on within a few feet of him, was the only inmate of the house who remained uninjured.

He of the Hairy Face killed quickly and silently,

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while there were yet some alive to resist him. Then, purring gently, he drank a deep draught of blood from each of his slaughtered victims. At last he reached Che' Sēman, and Mīnah, seeing him approach, made a feeble effort to evade him. Then began a fearful scene, the tiger playing with and torturing the girl. . . . So cunningly did he play with her, that, as Mat described it, a time as long as it would take to cook rice had elapsed, before the girl was finally put out of her misery.

Even then He of the Hairy Face did not quit the scene of slaughter. Mat, as he lay trembling in the shelf overhead, watched the tiger, through the long hours of that fearful night, play with the mangled bodies of each of his victims in turn. He leaped from one to the other, inflicting a fresh blow with teeth or claws on their torn flesh, with all the airy, light-hearted agility and sinuous grace of a kitten playing with its shadow in the sun. Then when the dawn was breaking, the tiger tore down the door, leaped lightly to the ground, and betook himself to the jungle.

When the sun was up, an armed party of neighbours came to the house to see if ought could be done. But they found the place a shambles, the bodies hardly to be recognized, the floor-laths dripping blood, and Mat lying face downward on the shelf, with his reason tottering in the balance. The bodies, though they had been horribly mutilated, had not been eaten, the tiger having contented himself with drinking the blood of his victims, and playing his ghastly game with them till the dawn broke.

This is, I believe, the only recorded instance in

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the Peninsula of a tiger having dared to attack men within their closed houses ; and the circumstances are so remarkable in every way, that I, for one, cannot find it in me to greatly blame the Malays for attributing the fearlessness of mankind, and the lust for blood displayed by Him of the Hairy Face, to the fact that he owed his existence to magic agencies, and was in reality no mere wild beast, but a member of the race upon which he so cruelly preyed.

*In Court and Kampong.* 1897.

## XIX

FLORENCE AYSCOUGH

### A Chinese Ridge-Pole

ALL of which brings me back to the fact that the 26th day of the 6th Moon in the Jên Hsü, Great Attack, Year has been chosen as the correct moment to Raise the Ridge-pole of my Grass Hut. This is the most important ceremony in connection with construction and must be correctly performed.

Chinese houses are built upon the same principle as our reinforced concrete buildings, that is, the framework which supports the roof is first placed in position and the walls are filled in afterwards. The framework, which in China is of wood, must first be carefully prepared and mortised together, so the Ridge-pole cannot be raised until some little time after the foundations are pounded in. As a rule, no nails are used in the construction of a Chinese house, and those required to nail down the non-Chinese floor boards we intend to have, are an extra item in the contract. In China, the rich use a paving of tiles or fine stone, and the poor are content with Mother Earth for their flooring. The woodwork takes some time to make ready, as in Kiangsu the transverse beams of the

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Guest-Hall are usually carved with historical scenes, and figures of legendary and actual characters. It is the custom to devote the principal beam, facing south, to a scene from the life of some hero whom one especially admires; Chu-ko Liang, the wise and self-effacing minister of Liu Pei, is very popular, and so is Kuo Tzŭ-i, the Saviour of the T'ang dynasty, but I have chosen Yo Fei, who is, to me, one of the most sympathetic characters in Chinese history. He lived at the close of the Sung dynasty, and was terribly distressed at the supine conduct of the Emperor, who would not support him in his effort to drive back the Golden Tartars who were then invading China. As a matter of fact, the Emperor was completely under the influence of the Prime Minister, Ch'in Kuei, who in his turn was in the pay of the Golden Tartars. One of their officers wrote Ch'in Kuei privately, saying: "You are always talking of 'peace, peace, peace,' and at the same time here in the North Yo Fei does nothing but fight, fight, fight, Kill him, and then there will be peace." So Ch'in Kuei spun a web of treachery about Yo Fei, and contrived that he should be thrown into prison on various trumped-up charges. His case was at once investigated, and when being questioned by the Imperial Envoy, Yo Fei took off his coat and showed four large characters which his mother had tattooed on his back when he was a boy: *ch'in chung pao kuo*—(To the last loyal in defence of the country). Nothing could be proved against him nor against his son, Yo Yün, who also was a prisoner, so one day Ch'in Kuei called a messenger and sent a very small "writing" in to the prison



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addressed to the Head Gaoler; whereupon the Gaoler, in a Memorial to the Throne, reported that Yo Fei was dead. This was on the twenty-ninth day of the twelfth Moon A.D. 1141. Snow was falling and it was very cold. The beam in my Great-Hall shows the scene when Yo Fei bares his back. It is carved on the south side of the southern beam, and I fear that its position will be so high and honourable that no one will see it. On the back of the southern beam is a large group showing Yo Fei's son, at the battle of the Ox Head Hill, and on the front of the north beam Chao Yün, a hero at the time of the Three Kingdoms, is seen escaping from the battle-field of the Long Sloping Bank with Liu Pei's infant son safely tucked in the fold of his coat. The short beams at the sides show a whole galaxy of my friends, such as Li T'ai-po the poet; Wang Hsi-chih the wonderful calligraphist; the Ho Ho twins who died of laughter at their joy over inventing the abacus; the Eight Immortals who live among the peach trees of the Western paradise, and so on. The carving is in fairly high relief and the background is darkened, so the figures, which are uncoloured, stand out very clearly. Workmen came from the city to carve the beams and worked with great speed, surety, and freedom. A slight outline in black ink was all they had to guide them. At one time it seemed rather doubtful whether the carving would be ready for the appointed day, so enormous arc lights were hung in the working shed, and the wood carvers worked throughout several nights. Everything was in readiness for the ceremony this morning.

## A CHINESE RIDGE-POLE

It has been a brilliant day of intense heat, a day when the Yang principle seemed at its height. The sky was that marvellous delphinium blue which one often sees in Central China, and a strong fresh breeze blew enormous billowy clouds up from out of the Yellow Sea. By ten o'clock the whole country-side had assembled, and kept up a continuous beating of gongs, clashing of cymbals, and popping of fire-crackers. Light and fire are supposed to be actual parts of the great Yang principle, and are therefore destructive to spirits which are accustomed to the World of Shade. This being the case, fire, candles, and lanterns are used by the whole Chinese nation as a protection from evil. To increase the awe-inspiring effect of bonfires, it is said that in the Dark Ages, pieces of bamboo which produced a crackling, popping noise were thrown into the flames. Later, tubes of paper filled with gunpowder took the place of bamboos, and these have developed into the fire-crackers of infinite variety in use to-day. I suppose that the terrifying effect of noise is at the root of the conviction that drums, cymbals, and gongs are a protection against demons. At all events, noise-making in China is a work of merit. The din this morning was well organized, and, let us hope, effective.

In front of the space which will be the Guest-Hall a chair was placed facing South ; it held a long strip of paper stamped with a brightly coloured portrait of Lu Pan, Patron Saint of Carpenters. In real life he was a youth named Pan, of the K'ung Clan, living in the state of Lu, *circa* 400 B.C. During his apprenticeship he devoted himself to the arts of sculpture, drawing,

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and the chiselling of metal ; he made plans of palaces, built boats, carts, and various contrivances. It is also said that he married a lady named Cloud who was skilful in the making of artistic vases. Père Doré, in his *Superstitions de la Chine*, tells many of the legends which have gathered around Lu Pan's name. At the age of forty he became a hermit on Mt. Li, and was there initiated into secrets of sorcery, which enabled him to float about the world on a cloud, and to move with ease to the Heavenly regions ; he is, moreover, supposed to have made wooden magpies that could fly ; he and Chang Pan, Patron Saint of Masons, are supposed to have built a palace in the peach gardens of the Jade Emperor, and carpenters say that when the pillars of Heaven were menaced with ruin, Lu Pan was entrusted with the task of repairing them. During the Ming dynasty, *circa* A.D. 1415, he received the posthumous title Great Master and Support of the Empire, and it is said that his spirit will certainly give ear to prayers offered by artisans.

The feast spread before Lu Pan's effigy this morning was of a most complicated nature. Every item on the menu had a very distinct *raison d'être*. Number-two Boy, by virtue of his past career as a teacher, always acts as Master of Ceremonies on occasions of pomp, and from the first streak of dawn he was hurrying about attending to various details.

He has given me the following inventory. It reads :

Lu Pan the First Instructor. Raising the Ridge-pole on a fortunate day. Items prepared.

## A CHINESE RIDGE-POLE

### A Complete Happiness :

This is a strip of scarlet paper upon which the words, " may great joy come on raising the beam," are written. It is pasted to the Ridge-pole before the rites begin.

### A Pair of Geese :

Emblems of Conjugal felicity.

### A Pair of Fish :

Because the word *yü*, fish, is a homonym of *Yü*, a surplus of excess, the fish has become a symbol of riches.

### Guarantee Prosperity Dumplings :

Steamed cakes made of rice flour. These played an important part during the ceremony.

### A Pig's Head :

A play on word sounds, turns the porker's head into a symbol of profitable trade.

### Bean Curd :

The word *fu*, curd, is a homonym of *fu*, happiness, and is therefore used to suggest joy.

### Tribute Candles :

Candles are, as a rule, red, but in this case green were preferred. Red suggests fire and might therefore be dangerous.

### Ingots of Silver :

Spirit money to be burned for Lu Pan's use on the return journey to the World of Shade.

### Sandal Wood Fragrance :

Incense-sticks for use on the said return journey.

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### Long Life Fragrance :

Pieces of sandal wood filled an incense burner placed in the centre of the table. These were lighted before the ceremony began, so when the crowd assembled the air was filled with sweet scent from clouds of smoke curling in the sunlight.

### Ascend to the Heights :

Huge fire-crackers, capable of emitting such sound as must infallibly terrify any demon.

### Braids from Han :

Strings of tiny fire-crackers which were originally a specialty of Hankow.

### Onions, Soy, Bean-curd, and Salt :

These are considered the ingredients of a well-balanced diet, and are therefore used to express the wish : " Wind harmonious rain in accordance with." That is, " wind and rain in proper quantities and at proper times," a normal desire for people who consider agriculture the chief business of life.

### The Lucky Grass, an Omen of Prosperity :

A great bunch of sweet flag-leaves.

### Red of the Senior Classic :

The name of a delicious wine. Every three years examinations of graduate scholars of the Third Degree were held in the Palace, and the man who won first place was called *chuang yüan*, Senior Classic.

### Before the Rain :

Name of a very delicate tea, made from leaves picked early in the season.

## A CHINESE RIDGE-POLE

Ten Thousand Years Green :

A bunch of leaves of the evergreen *Rohdea Japonica*, an emblem of longevity also used in a congratulatory sense because of a play on words : *ch'ing*—green—has the same sound as *ch'ing*, to congratulate.

Peak-Nest :

An ornament in the shape of a gilt lotus flower destined to be placed in the centre of the Ridge-pole.

*A Chinese Mirror.* 1925.

## XX

PETER QUENNEL

### The Japanese Stage

THE building may weather the strain, but not its ornaments. All the charm, the "picturesqueness," of Japanese life, advertised so speciously by Western travellers, has been shivered in the earthquake shock of modernism like some object only unbroken because untouched. It has vanished with the isolation which preserved it. That Japanese culture was at least moribund before the Meiji—if not a mere corpse within its tomb, still fresh-looking while no air could breathe on its features—is suggested by the rapidity with which it has crumbled. As early as 1798, a Japanese writer, when pleading for expansion, declared boldly that cultural growth was at a standstill. The canons which regulated æsthetic feeling were so sterile as the empty protocol of politeness.

Everything becomes conventional in Japan; courtesy, the sense of cleanliness, the feeling for art. Thus, it is a convention to keep the interior of a house clean, to arrange flowers in the ceremonial alcove, and to hang certain pictures in a certain way. The outside of a house is another matter; it may be dishevelled and unprepossessing

## THE JAPANESE STAGE

as you please. Nor are buildings constructed in the Western style, government offices, universities and schools, considered to be deserving of much nicety ; and Japanese, even the most fastidious, are strangely unaffected by squalid surroundings.

So it is in questions of æsthetic taste. But the process of crystallization to which I have referred, though deadening, acts also as a preservative. Nothing could be more slipshod than a Japanese town, with its look of an American frontier settlement, the thick telegraph posts leaning all awry, the low shop fronts masked in corrugated iron. An haphazard supremely philistinian prospect ! And yet, here and there, as one comes closer, are little enchanting fragments of good taste, mysteriously left intact by the general havoc : cheap crockery, the printed cotton strips which are sold to be made up as women's sashes, widths of patterned silk for lining sleeves, lacquer bowls and lacquer trays, domestic furniture—the last in smooth-grained white paulownia wood—and all the elegant apparatus of the writing desk.

In such details the Japanese is still an æsthete ; but taste, as they are prepared to admit themselves, is less uncommon lower down in the social scale than in the world of enlightened students and busy professors. The pen is superseding the traditional brush—the fountain-pen with a hard characterless nib that robs the Japanese ideogram of its proper fluency ; whereas the shopman or the innkeeper does his accounts, holding a brush gracefully upright between finger and thumb, delicately moistening its point on the hollowed ink-stone, in the attitude of a contemplative Chinese sage.



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Most Japanese wear the national dress at home but the shopkeeper still wears it in the street, just as his wife retains the traditional native coiffure. Lovely, if absurd, that coiffure is! helmet flattened artfully across the neck in two broad wing-shaped flanges of pomaded hair, a frontal piece drawn back circularly from the forehead, the whole edifice crowned by a huge *chignon*. It dwarfs and oddly conventionalizes the face; and the face itself, heavily coated with liquid white, downcast, unsmiling, inexpressive, exquisitely completes the picture of subservient womanhood. . . .

As harmonious is the paraphernalia of masculine fashion. Divided skirts, or baggy trousers, over the kimono are assumed by middle-class citizens when walking out, though often dispensed with by the rank and file. Short coats, which bear a miniature family crest embroidered in a tiny circle upon the sleeve, made of silk or, during the warm months, of gauzy tissue, serve as a practical and easily fitting outer garment; while the kimono, which is generally brown or grey, admits of a wide range of charming patterns. The *ensemble* is elegant but subdued; Japanese elegance—and this is perhaps its greatest merit—is usually based on an almost religious care for detail and likes to express itself by a complete absence of outward show. The lining should be richer than the robe; spontaneity must be studied as a fine art; and the product of inbreeding and over-refinement is an air of consummate rightness in everyday objects. Japanese art was the art of life; if so many of its creations when brought to Europe seem unimpressive, trivial and somehow meaning-

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less, it is no doubt because the secret of Japanese culture was its domestic and utilitarian quality. The Japanese have been dubbed "a people of artists," whereas "a race of dilettantes" would be nearer the truth, since it is not the artist whose way of life is most "artistic," and the genius of Japanese in their later period, during the seclusion of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, is best exemplified by the discreet but glowing polish they were able to confer upon the surface of the everyday world. . . .

In arts strictly creative they were poor enough, for creative art is visionary and experimental, and vision and experiment are not matters of taste. Nor can it be said that Western art, though earnestly imitated by the young, has yet helped Japanese artists to a new impulse. Mock-Cézannes, mock-Renoirs, and spurious Matisses are turned out with great facility by modern painters, whose enthusiasm is in advance of their real talent. Where art persists, it is as vestige of the old order ; but these vestiges, through their hold on popular taste, are even now indisputably alive. They have come drifting down over the muddy waters of change, a floating detached fragment of mediæval Japan.

In the theatre one steps back a hundred years. The Kabuki-za, the home of traditional melodrama, is a large and solid building in a bustling neighbourhood, much bigger and more comfortable than a Western theatre—it has the dimensions of a European opera-house—replete with restaurants, little shops, rooms and passages in which the audience take the air between the acts. The auditorium is well equipped and very spacious,

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possessing modern tip-up seats and an ugly curtain. Entire families of the more old-fashioned Japanese crowd the floor and fill the galleries as far as the roof.

They are silent, deeply attentive to the play. Three sonorous blows of wood on wood preface the rise of the garish curtain, which discovers a long, brilliantly lighted stage—twice as long, at a rough guess, as any Western scene—and connected with the rear of the theatre by a raised gang-plank running out upon the left. This is an alternative means of exit; it may also be used as a subsidiary platform, and sometimes, besides the actors who command the stage, there are others who stand perched above the audience, separated from them only by a few feet, entering or leaving through their midst and holding separate colloquies as they go. . . .

A first impression is vaguely of immense sumptuousness. All the costumes worn by Kabuki actors are traditional in colour and design, rich heavy silks and massive brocades set off by such dignity and sense of style that they resemble the lustrous carapaces of splendid insects. Nothing slipshod or tawdrily inconsequent spoils the illusion; actors move deliberately behind the footlights and, when they pause to open a fan or arrange a robe, perform the gesture with so conscious a natural skill that virtuosity itself is put to shame. They are natural in a supernatural key, and the effect is less of naturalism or of symbolism than of another life quite distinct from the life one knows—another world, another sphere of human existence. Their voices, too, though typically Japanese with the ding-dong monotonous

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rhythm of Japanese speech, have a curious ranting inflection all their own. They roll their eyes dramatically and twist their mouths ; they stamp their feet and assume postures of stiff astonishment. . . .

As for the story—that is mysterious and far-away, plot and sub-plot and counter-plot woven together in the most undramatic fashion and tangled up in the most improbable of intrigues. A great deal appears to be happening and not enough ; there is little attempt at climax and crescendo, and the little there is trails off into insignificance. Everybody's passions remain at boiling-point ; but the drama boils and bubbles to slight effect.

Speaking loosely, there are two classes of popular melodrama—plays of comparatively recent origin, which have to do with the later feudal period, its courtesans, dissolute merchants and fierce samurai, and plays which depict the events of an earlier epoch, and are inspired by the romantic atmosphere of the ancient No-dance. The former are to some extent naturalistic ; and it was one of these that, on a memorable afternoon which extended itself hazily into the evening—we were in the theatre from about five till past eleven—gave me my first experience of the national drama. I left the building with a headache and acute cramp, but with an increased respect for the possibilities of the Japanese genius.

*A Superficial Journey through Tokyo  
and Peking. 1932.*

## XXI

A. J. VILLIERS

### The Southern Ocean

WE had our wind. On the sixteenth day out it freshened from the west'ard, and we began to make much better progress. Some time in the evening of that day we passed Campbell Island. We were not sure exactly when it was, for we were not sure exactly where we were. As soon as we got past that southernmost island of the New Zealand group, the wind piped fresher still, and throughout the next day we flew on, every sail drawing its utmost of a quartering wind and the ship lying heavily over. In the first night-watch of the seventeenth day the ship sailed 48 miles; before that day was out she had covered 290 miles, and nightfall found the captain walking the poop with a smile. We held to every stitch, even the kites that were usually not bent until Trade winds were found, and the ship fairly quivered as she stumbled a little in her stride at times, and a big sea hit her with a great clump and a heavy shower of spray. The wind roared through the rigging; sails strained at sheet and brace and yard, threatening to carry them away; the wheel was abominably heavy and all but

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unmanageable with two men. For'ard the fore-deck was continuously awash, and feet of water lay to lee. Some of it found its way into the fo'c'sle; one heavy sea which came right over the whole length of her found an open skylight into the galley and descended upon the cook. The same sea washed the man from the lee wheel. What did it matter? The wind was fair, and we had a lot of leeway to make up. "Drive her, sailor," we said; "drive her till the lee side smokes hot flush with the water, till the yardarm of the foreyard to lee rakes the sea with its roll, till she ships them green along the length of her, till we have four men to the wheel, if you like, if only she flies on! Drive her, sailor," we said; "she can stand it!"

But could she stand it? Up to a point, maybe; but only so far and no farther. In the evening the captain told the mate to snug her down for the night, and we took the t'gallant-stays'ls off her. But not very much later the roar of blown-out canvas aloft told us she should soon have to take in a little more than that. We did.

The night came down quickly, black and threatening. The sky was heavily overcast, and there was a new and louder note in the moaning of the wind around the rigging screws; the sea was rising steadily and the barometer going down alarmingly; the wind increased each hour, until it blew so hard, and the ship lay over so much, that it was almost impossible to stand on deck. The pitching of the ship in the big sea, and her quivering now and then, did not add to the ease of keeping upright on her decks, nor did the water that continuously fell upon them from either side.

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Not very long after we had made the t'gallant-stays'ls fast, the leach of the mizzen-royal blew out with a wild boom of canvas and quivering of the yard. Then the three royals had to come in, and the gaff-tops'l and the flying-jib; and when they all were fast, the three upper t'gallants had to be clewed up, for the wind was still increasing and the night was uglier than ever. It was a matter of great difficulty to mount to the royal-yards, high above the reeling decks; to look into the wind up there was to have one's breath taken away. Fierce as the wind rushed across the decks, it was peaceful there to the fury aloft. How the wind roars through the sailing ship's rigging! How magnificent is its sound! Though it brings to us only work—hard, dangerous, tremendous, herculean work of a kind people ashore can never know—we yet can feel the glory of the roar of the wind in the sailer's steel rigging. A score-odd notes are here, if you listen closely, if you listen carefully into the sullen great roaring that drowns everything at first. There is the plaintive moaning at the rigging screws, each with a different note; the sighing through the slackened running gear, and the mad roar at the wet and powerful backstays. Out on the yards there is a different note again, the noise of powerful wind meeting powerful canvas, and sending the good ship on; and down there on deck, far, far below, where puny figures haul on ropes and a big figure that is the mate stares aloft, is the crashing and the booming of the seas that break aboard. The great seas—the sea is gale-high now—come thundering at the ship like breakers at a rock-clad ocean beach, and break all around her and all

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over her as if they are bent upon breaking her, too ; and here aloft the wind sweeps unchecked upon us, and tears the coats from our backs, and snatches the caps from our heads, and blinds us with rain, and cuts us with hail, and tears at the grip of our numbed hands upon the weather rigging, and brings the moisture to our eyes, and the spirit to our souls, and we fight on. It is all very grand—very grand indeed. But it is also very hard, and we did not entirely relish the prospects that were before us, as we fought our way aloft and went out upon those steel t'gallant yards, and felt our oilskins flapping about our ears, and the whole of our carcasses thoroughly wet, and began our fight with the canvas. For we knew that we had driven her perhaps a little too long, and we did not know when we might next enjoy a watch below.

When we came on deck from making the upper t'gallants'l fast, it was to find that the other watch was out, and the lot of us began to haul up the cro'jack. The ship was staggering drunkenly then, and the night had gone mad. Sprays drove at her out of the murk to wind'ard higher than the upper tops'l-yard, and the salt water fell so often upon us that we no longer knew, as we worked desperately on, whether it was the rain or the sea which was wetting us. We only knew that we were as wet as we could possibly be, and we worked on. The wind fairly shrieked across the decks in one great flat roar of force that you could almost *see* ; the ship lay over so that as we hauled to wind'ard the slightest roll sent us sprawling.

It took over an hour to get the cro'jack hauled up in its gear, and as long again to get it fast



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aloft. The canvas was drenched through and through with rain and sea ; if it had been flat calm it would have been heavy work getting it in. But with such a wind ! We fought it piece by piece, the fifteen of us—three were at the wheel and one was for'ard on the look-out—with the mates, fighting together, all as close as possible on the yard. We fought it in the middle first, and got the gaskets around it, though it was not properly fast. That was only a preliminary move to take some of the weight out of it in order that we could move farther out along the weather side and attack it there. But that preliminary move took half an hour, and our muscles ached abominably long before we moved out *en masse* to the battle with the weather leach. It was here that the real fight took place ; once that was fast, the rest of the sail was child's play. It is wonderful how vitalizing strong wind is, felt in a gamely fighting sailing ship high aloft.

It has been intended to leave the ship at that, with the mains'l and the lower t'gallants'ls still on her, which was a power of canvas. She was shortened down enough, we thought, and the watch below was told to stand by. But she was not shortened down enough at all, and the wind pretty soon told us so. I was at the weather wheel a little later—and the work there was harder and more trying than any aloft, by the way—when there came a mad noise from for'ard and a swift rush of electric sparks. It was thought for the moment that the maintop-mast stay had gone, which might have been very serious for us, but it was only the stays'l which is set upon it, and the flying rush of the steel hanks to which it

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was bent had caused the sparks. That was bad enough, in any case ; the torn canvas flapped and boomed and thundered about the fore-deck, with the steel sheet and heavy tackle that had held it flying in all directions. Again all hands were called, and though it did not take long to get the broken stays'l fast, that was only the beginning. The mainsail came in—a huge wet bag of wind-distended canvas, a sheer hundred feet across the head and forty feet deep. We got it fast ; and then the night began in earnest. The lower t'gallants'ls had to come in, and the buntlines began to carry away.

*Falmouth for Orders.* 1929.

## XXII

WILLIAM BEACH THOMAS

### The Sheep Shearers

THE immense emptiness of Australia, felt by all who leave the railways even for a mile or two, becomes a positive quality when you reach Central Australia. This emptiness establishes a new sort of relationship between wayfarers in the desert—desert only in the sense of loneliness, for the soil will grow anything, and many stations, including the one that gave me hospitality, enjoy twenty-four inches of rain within the year. As we motored on and on across the downs, seeing little beyond the tall yellow grasses, reaches of eucalyptus scrub and occasional fences between the league-long "paddocks," we passed now and again a horseman or a couple of pedestrians with their swag upon their shoulders, making straight across country. The less well-equipped of these wanderers receive, as a matter of course, a gift of plentiful rations at any stations they pass. The provision of meat and bread for them is a definite but unconsidered part of the expenses of a station. Universal hospitality is, and must be, a social obligation in such places. Not to give would be as bad as, say, to leave a gate open or

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to let rabbits multiply, both unpardonable crimes. Yet people who pass one another on the journey as often as not make no friendly sign whatever. The companion who was driving me through some of the sheep country to witness a great shearing just once stopped to talk with an old acquaintance who had worked with him for years some while ago. The two were obviously glad to meet, but neither could find anything whatever to say. After a few barely articulate questions and staccato responses, a hopeless silence fell between them. My friend, after shifting from foot to foot for a little, got back into the car, and the other, towering above him on the whip-seat of a huge wool-wagon, called to his horses; and the encounter was over. Lonely men do not converse easily till some real subject is opened. The next people we passed were two men with six light horses, nearly thoroughbred. They were conjectured to be off west to arrange some fencing contract. Later we met and passed a low, much-loaded cart of curious pattern. The outfit proclaimed the business. The driver was the cook or his boy, and they were off ahead, according to the unvarying custom, to prepare a camp and a dinner for the stock-men. These, as prophesied, we met later driving some fifteen thousand sheep before them. We had now struck a stock route, well trodden, and for many hundred yards on either side the grass was eaten to the bone by successive heads. Presently we passed a second wool-wagon, carrying twelve tons of bales and drawn by twenty-four heavy horses, most of them Clydesdales of good type. We were close to the homestead and the shearing shed.

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Presently they came into sight, and in spite of pamphlets and illustrations and books that I had read about the master industry of Australia, I was wholly unprepared for one part of the spectacle. Corralled up outside the central shed were many thousand merino sheep, the foremost pressing up a wooden incline leading into the upper storey of the shed. How was it possible that such a continuous stream should enter the considerable, but by no means vast building? I could see no sheep emerge. They might have been going into a Chicago packing house. The mystery, of course, like most mysteries, was no mystery. When later I went up into the long barn that occupied the whole length of the shed, I saw some forty men wielding forty machines; and could have spent hours watching the cyclopean work. The heavy wood-work gave a cloistral appearance to a building that outside was ugly with the incomparable ugliness of corrugated iron; and the lazy sunshine from a fleckless sky gave place to an almost religious light, where, if "to work is to pray," men prayed with fervour indeed. I have never before seen so much energy so effectively applied. The team of shearers, young, and athletic in type, each handled an electrically driven clipping machine; and as it pressed home to the roots of the fleece, the wool peeled back very much as water is folded aside by the bow of a ship travelling fast and smoothly through still water. The men were stripped almost as men working before a furnace; and the sweat-drops fell from their forehead on to the sheep huddled at their feet. Few animals struggled or so much as showed restiveness. They doubtless

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felt themselves helpless in such forcible and skilful hands. It took just over two minutes to disengage the fleece of a heavy merino. The moment that the fleece fell the young athlete had the sheep on its legs, pushed it by the rump between his straddled legs, and hustled it down a sloping gangway to a narrow pen beneath. Instantly a second unshorn sheep was dragged out from the pen behind the shearer, and on the same level. Sometimes the man would pause just a moment or two to drink a few drops of water from a primeval drinking gourd hung on a beam behind him ; but that was the only sort of cessation.

Each man's tally was kept by means of a count of the shorn animals that were cooped in the narrow pen below and behind the shed ; and lest the men should work too jealously, and perhaps hurt the sheep in their competitive zeal, each tally was a secret between the shearer and the manager. I was let into it, and saw that ten men were shearing an average of over two hundred sheep in a day of about seven working hours. The price to the shearer was two pounds a hundred. The neck of a merino is peculiarly difficult to shear, but the men seemed to drive the machine into the heavy folds with the rough energy of a crow-bar driven into the ground. Yet the animals did not appear to suffer. Each bled a fraction like the chin of a badly shaven man, but you could see no conscious discomfort.

The intensive energy of the shearers imparted itself to all the workers : the men with the brooms (made out of the straw and ear of brown millet) swept up the relic wool as if their life depended on it. The quickest, most continuous worker of

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all—though, of course, his work was not muscularly heavy—was the classer. Every fleece after being trimmed on a central counter, or grid, through which the smaller fragments fell, was laid on a board before him. He took one little piece between the finger and thumb of the two hands, gave it a sharp jerk to test the strength, and instantly called out the number of the grade. In that instant, by trained touch and sight, he had decided on the grade ; and the five qualities were stacked into compartments behind his counter before being pressed into bales.

The papers had been full of accounts of the shearers' strike, of men "striking on the job" or going slow. It was my fortune not to see this side of things, but to watch a team of piece-workers who put more intensive energy into their toil than I had ever seen or indeed thought possible. They performed an astonishingly athletic feat. Australia may be described as a country where the people have an inordinate power of work qualified by an inordinate desire to play.

*A Traveller in News.* 1925.

## XXIII

### APSLEY CHERRY-GARRARD

#### Winter in the Antarctic

THE view from eight hundred feet up the mountain was magnificent and I got my spectacles out and cleared the ice away time after time to look. To the east a great field of pressure ridges below, looking in the moonlight as if giants had been ploughing with ploughs which made furrows fifty or sixty feet deep: these ran right up to the Barrier edge, and beyond was the frozen Ross Sea, lying flat, white and peaceful as though such things as blizzards were unknown. To the north and north-east the Knoll. Behind us Mount Terror on which we stood, and over all the grey limitless Barrier seemed to cast a spell of cold immensity, vague, ponderous, a breeding-place of wind and drift and darkness. God! What a place!

There was now little moonlight or daylight, but for the next forty-eight hours we used both to their utmost, being up at all times by day and night, and often working on when there was great difficulty in seeing anything; digging by the light of the hurricane lamp. By the end of two days we had the walls built, and banked up to one or



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two feet from the top ; we were to fit the roof cloth close before banking up the rest. The great difficulty in banking was the hardness of the snow, it being impossible to fill in the cracks between the blocks which were more like paving-stones than anything else. The door was in, being a triangular tent doorway, with flaps which we built close in to the walls, cementing it with snow and rocks. The top folded over a plank and the bottom was dug into the ground.

Birdie was very disappointed that we could not finish the whole thing that day : he was nearly angry about it, but there was a lot to do yet and we were tired out. We turned out early the next morning (Tuesday 18th) to try and finish the igloo, but it was blowing too hard. When we got to the top we did some digging, but it was quite impossible to get the roof on, and we had to leave it. We realized that day that it blew much harder at the top of the slope than where our tent was. It was bitterly cold up there that morning with a wind force 4-5 and a minus thirty temperature.

The oil question was worrying us quite a lot. We were now well in to the fifth of our six tins, and economizing as much as possible, often having only two hot meals a day. We had to get down to the Emperor penguins somehow and get some blubber to run the stove which has been made for us in the hut. The 19th being a calm fine day we started at 9.30, with an empty sledge, two ice-axes, Alpine rope, harnesses and skinning tools.

Wilson had made this journey through the Cape Crozier pressure ridges several times in the *Discovery* days. But then they had daylight, and

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they had found a practicable way close under the cliffs which at the present moment were between us and the ridges.

As we neared the bottom of the mountain slope, farther to the north than we had previously gone, we had to be careful about crevasses, but we soon hit off the edge of the cliff and skirted along it until it petered out on the same level as the Barrier. Turning left-handed we headed towards the sea-ice, knowing that there were some two miles of pressure between us and Cape Crozier itself. For about half a mile it was fair going, rounding big knobs of pressure, but always managing to keep more or less on the flat and near the ice-cliff which soon rose to a very great height on our left. Bill's idea was to try to keep close under this cliff, along that same *Discovery* way which I have mentioned above. They never arrived there early enough for the eggs in those days: the chicks were hatched. Whether we should now find any Emperors, and if so whether they would have any eggs, was by no means certain.

However, we soon began to get into trouble, meeting several crevasses every few yards, and I have no doubt crossing scores of others of which we had no knowledge. Though we hugged the cliffs as close as possible we found ourselves on the top of the first pressure ridge, separated by a deep gulf from the ice-slope which we wished to reach. Then we were in a great valley between the first and second ridges: we got into huge heaps of ice pressed up in every shape on every side, crevassed in every direction: we slithered over snow-slopes and crawled along drift ridges,

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trying to get in towards the cliffs. And always we came up against impossible places and had to crawl back. Bill led on a length of Alpine rope fastened to the toggle of the sledge; Birdie was in his harness also fastened to the toggle, and I was in my harness fastened to the rear of the sledge, which was of great use to us both as a bridge and a ladder.

Two or three times we tried to get down the ice-slopes to the comparatively level road under the cliff, but it was always too great a drop. In that dim light every proportion was distorted; some of the places we actually did manage to negotiate with ice-axes and Alpine rope looked absolute precipices, and there were always crevasses at the bottom if you slipped. On the way back I did slip into one of these and was hauled out by the other two standing on the wall above me.

We then worked our way down into the hollow between the first and second large pressure ridges, and I believe on to the top of the second. The crests here rose fifty or sixty feet. After this I don't know where we went. Our best landmarks were patches of crevasses, sometimes three or four in a few footsteps. The temperatures were lowish ( $-37^{\circ}$ ), it was impossible for me to wear spectacles, and this was a tremendous difficulty to me and a handicap to the party; Bill would find a crevasse and point it out; Birdie would cross; and then time after time, in trying to step over or climb over the sledge, I put my feet right into the middle of the cracks. This day I went well in at least six times; once, when we were close to the sea, rolling into and out of one and

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then down a steep slope until brought up by Birdie and Bill on the rope.

We blundered along until we got into a great cul-de-sac which probably formed the end of the two ridges, where they butted on to the sea-ice. On all sides rose great walls of battered ice with steep snow-slopes in the middle, where we slithered about and blundered into crevasses. To the left rose the huge cliff of Cape Crozier, but we could not tell whether there were not two or three pressure ridges between us and it, and though we tried at least four ways, there was no possibility of getting forward.

And then we heard the Emperors calling.

Their cries came to us from the sea-ice we could not see, but which must have been a chaotic quarter of a mile away. They came echoing back from the cliffs, as we stood helpless and tantalized. We listened and realized that there was nothing for it but to return, for the little light which now came in the middle of the day was going fast, and to be caught in absolute darkness there was a horrible idea. We started back on our tracks and almost immediately I lost my footing and rolled down a slope into a crevasse. Birdie and Bill kept their balance and I clambered back to them. The tracks were very faint and we soon began to lose them. Birdie was the best man at following tracks that I have ever known, and he found them time after time. But at last even he lost them altogether and we settled we must just go ahead. As a matter of fact, we picked them up again, and by then were out of the worst: but we were glad to see the tent.

The next morning (Thursday, June 20) we

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started work on the igloo at 3 a.m. and managed to get the canvas roof on in spite of a wind which harried us all that day. Little did we think what that roof had in store for us as we packed it in with snow blocks, stretching it over our second sledge, which we put athwartships across the middle of the longer walls. The windward (south) end came right down to the ground and we tied it securely to rocks before packing it in. On the other three sides we had a good two feet or more of slack all round, and in every case we tied it to rocks by lanyards at intervals of two feet. The door was the difficulty, and for the present we left the cloth arching over the stones, forming a kind of portico. The whole was well packed in and over with slabs of hard snow, but there was no soft snow with which to fill up the gaps between the blocks. However, we felt already that nothing could drag that roof out of its packing, and subsequent events proved that we were right.

It was a bleak job for three o'clock in the morning before breakfast, and we were glad to get back to the tent and a meal, for we meant to have another go at the Emperors that day. With the first glimpse of light we were off for the rookery again.

But we now knew one or two things about that pressure which we had not known twenty-four hours ago ; for instance, that there was a lot of alteration since the *Discovery* days and that probably the pressure was bigger. As a matter of fact it has been since proved by photographs that the ridges now ran out three-quarters of a mile farther into the sea than they did ten years before. We knew also that if we entered the

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pressure at the only place where the ice-cliffs came down to the level of the Barrier, as we did yesterday, we could neither penetrate to the rookery nor get in under the cliffs where formerly a possible way had been found. There was only one other thing to do—to go over the cliff. And this was what we proposed to try and do.

Now these ice-cliffs are some two hundred feet high, and I felt uncomfortable, especially in the dark. But as we came back the day before we had noticed at one place a break in the cliffs from which there hung a snow-drift. It *might* be possible to get down that drift.

And so, all harnessed to the sledge, with Bill on a long lead out in front and Birdie and myself checking the sledge behind, we started down the slope which ended in the cliff, which, of course, we could not see. We crossed a number of small crevasses, and soon we knew we must be nearly there. Twice we crept up to the edge of the cliff with no success, and then we found the slope: more, we got down it without great difficulty, and it brought us out just where we wanted to be, between the land cliffs and the pressure.

Then began the most exciting climb among the pressure that you can imagine. At first very much as it was the day before—pulling ourselves and one another up ridges, slithering down slopes, tumbling into and out of crevasses and holes of all sorts, we made our way along under the cliffs which rose higher and higher above us as we neared the black lava precipices which form Cape Crozier itself. We straddled along the top of a snow-ridge with a razor-backed edge, balancing the sledge between us as we wriggled: on our right

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was a drop of great depth with crevasses at the bottom, on our left was a smaller drop also crevassed. We crawled along, and I can tell you it was exciting work in the more than half-darkness. At the end was a series of slopes full of crevasses, and finally we got right in under the rock on to moraine, and here we had to leave the sledge.

We roped up, and started to worry along under the cliffs, which had now changed from ice to rock, and rose 800 feet above us. The tumult of pressure which climbed against them showed no order here. Four hundred miles of moving ice behind it had just tossed and twisted those giant ridges until Job himself would have lacked words to reproach their Maker. We scrambled over and under, hanging on with our axes, and cutting steps where we could not find a foothold with our crampons. And always we got towards the Emperor penguins, and it really began to look as if we were going to do it this time, when we came up against a wall of ice which a single glance told us we could never cross. One of the largest pressure ridges had been thrown, end on, against the cliff. We seemed to be stopped, when Bill found a black hole, something like a fox's earth, disappearing into the bowels of the ice. We looked at it: "Well, here goes!" he said, and put his head in, and disappeared. Bowers likewise. It was a longish way, but quite possible to wriggle along, and presently I found myself looking out of the other side with a deep gully below me, the rock face on one hand and the ice on the other. "Put your back against the ice and your feet against the rock and lever yourself along," said Bill, who was already standing on

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firm ice at the far end in a snow pit. We cut some fifteen steps to get out of that hole. Excited by now, and thoroughly enjoying ourselves, we found the way ahead easier, until the penguins' call reached us again and we stood, three crystallized ragamuffins, above the Emperors' home. They were there all right, and we were going to reach them, but where were all the thousands of which we had heard?

We stood on an ice-foot which was really a dwarf cliff some twelve feet high, and the sea-ice, with a good many ice-blocks strewn upon it, lay below. The cliff dropped straight, with a bit of an overhang and no snow-drift. This may have been because the sea had only frozen recently; whatever the reason may have been it meant that we should have a lot of difficulty in getting up again without help. It was decided that some one must stop on the top with the Alpine rope, and clearly that one should be I, for with short sight and fogged spectacles which I could not wear I was much the least useful of the party for the job immediately ahead. Had we had the sledge we would have used it as a ladder, but of course we had left this at the beginning of the moraine miles back.

We saw the Emperors standing all together huddled under the Barrier cliff some hundreds of yards away. The little light was going fast: we were much more excited about the approach of complete darkness and the look of wind in the south than we were about our triumph. After indescribable effort and hardship we were witnessing a marvel of the natural world, and we were the first and only men who had ever done



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so ; we had within our grasp material which might prove of the utmost importance to science ; we were turning theories into facts with every observation we made—and we had but a moment to give.

*The Worst Journey in the World*, Vol. I. 1922.

## XXIV

JOHN MASEFIELD

### Cape Horn Calm

OFF Cape Horn there are but two kinds of weather, neither one of them a pleasant kind. If you get the fine kind it is dead calm, without enough wind to lift the wind vane. The sea lies oily and horrible, heaving in slow, solemn swells, the colour of soup. The sky closes down upon the sea all round you, the same colour as the water. The sun never shines over those seas, though sometimes there is a red flush, in the east or in the west, to hint that somewhere, very far away, there is daylight brightening the face of things.

If you are in a ship in the Cape Horn calm you forge ahead, under all sail, a quarter of a mile an hour. The swell heaves you up and drops you, in long, slow, gradual movements, in a rhythm beautiful to mark. You roll, too, in a sort of horrible crescendo, half a dozen rolls and a lull. You can never tell when she will begin to roll. She will begin quite suddenly, for no apparent reason. She will go over and over with a rattling clatter of blocks and chains. Then she will swing back, groaning along the length of her, to slat the great sails and set the reef-points flogging,

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to a hard clack and jangle of staysail sheets. Then over she will go again, and back, and again over, rolling farther each time. At the last of her rolls there comes a clattering of tins, as the galley gear and whack pots slither across to leeward, followed by cursing seamen. The iron swing-ports bang to and fro. The straining and groaning sounds along her length. Every block aloft cracks and whines. The sea splashes up the scuppers. The sleepers curse her from their bunks for a drunken drogher. Then she lets up and stands on her dignity, and rolls no more perhaps for another quarter of an hour.

It is cold, this fine variety, for little snow squalls are always blowing by, to cover the decks with soft dry snow, and to melt upon the sails. If you go aloft you must be careful what you touch. If you touch a wire shroud, or a chain sheet, the skin comes from your hand as though a hot iron had scarred it. If you but scratch your hand aloft, in that fierce cold, the scratch will suppurate. I broke the skin of my hand once with a jagged scrap of wire in the main-rigging. The scratch festered so that I could not move my hand for a week. It was a little scratch, the eighth of an inch long. It has left its mark. The sailors used to prophesy that it would cause the loss of my arm.

On the whole we had an easy time of it in the Cape Horn calm. No work was being done about decks. Our rigging was all set up, our blocks all greased and overhauled, our chafing gear in its place, and the heavy-weather sails bent. When we came on deck we had little to do but stand by ready for a call, while the flurries of snow blew

## CAPE HORN CALM

past and the ship's planking creaked. The old man was fond of mat-making. I don't know how he made the mats, whether with a "sword," in the usual way, or by a needle upon canvas. He used the coarse thread of bunting for his material. He made the boys unravel some old signal flags into little balls of thread while we were rolling in the swell. That was nearly all the work we did while the calm lasted.

When we were down below in the half-deck, the little room twelve feet square, where the six boys lived and slept, we were almost happy. We had rigged up a bogey stove, with a chimney which kinked into elbows whenever the roll was very heavy. It did not burn very well, this bogey stove, but we contrived to cook by it. We were only allowed coke for fuel, but we always managed to steal coal enough either from the cook or from the coal-hole. It was our great delight to sit upon our chests in the dog watch, looking at the bogey, listening to the creaking chimney, watching the smoke pouring out from the chinks. In the night watches, when the sleepers lay quiet in their bunks behind the red baize curtains, one or two of us who kept the deck would creep below to put on coal. That was the golden time, the time of the night watch, to sit there in the darkness among the sleepers hearing the coals click.

One of us in each night watch made cocoa for the others. At about four bells, when the watch was half through, the cocoa-maker would slink below to put the kettle on to boil and to mix the brew in the pannikins. There is an old poet (I think it is Ben Jonson ; it may be Marlowe) who asks, "Where are there greater atheists than your

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cooks?" I would ask, less rhythmically perhaps, "Where are there loftier thinkers than your cocoa-makers?" Ah, what profound thoughts I thought; what mute, but Miltonic, poetry I made in that dim half-deck, by the smoky bogey, in the night, in the stillness, amid the many waters. The kings were ashore in their palaces, tossing uneasily (as who would not) upon their purple pillows. Couriers were flogging spent horses along the roads of the world, bringing news of battle, of death, of pestilence. Soldiers were going into action. Prisoners were scraping shot in the chain gang. Women were weeping, and the huntsmen were up in America. Sitting there in the dim half-deck, watching the kettle boil, I saw it all. I was like Buddha under the holy branches. My mind filled with pictures like the magical water in the bowl of a wizard.

Then what a joy it was to take the cocoa tin, containing a greasy dark stuff of cocoa and condensed milk, already mixed. One put a spoonful into each pannikin and then a spoonful of soft, brown, lumpy ship's sugar. Then with the spoon, or with a sheath knife, one bruised the ingredients together. With what a luscious crunch they blended! How perfect was the smell of the crushed mixture! How it covered away, like the smell of incense at a Mass, the rude, worldly scents such as tar, and stale Negro Head, and oilskins, and newly greased sea boots. Then, as one mixed, one would hear the bells struck. Ting, ting. Ting, ting. Ting. Five bells—an hour and a half before the watch would end. One would hear the old men of the sea, the old sailors, as they shambled along to and fro biting on the

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pipe-stems, yarning about ships that were long ago bilged on the coral. One would hear the scraps of songs, little stray verses, set to old beautiful tunes. There was one old man who had no better voice than a donkey. He was for ever walking the deck when I brewed the cocoa, singing "Rolling Home," the most popular of all sailor songs. I think I would rather have written "Rolling Home" than "Hydriotaphia." If I had written "Rolling Home" I would pass my days at sea or in West Coast nitrate ports hearkening to the roll and the roar of it as the yards go jolting up the mast or the anchor comes to the bows.

Pipe all hands to man the capstan, see your cables run  
down clear,  
Heave away, and with a will, boys, 'tis to old England's  
shores we steer ;  
And we'll sing in joyous chorus in the watches of the  
night,  
For we'll sight the shores of England when the grey dawn  
brings the light.

I used to think that stanza, as the old sailor sang it in the dark watches, the most beautiful thing the tongue of man ever spoke.

While he sang, I used to take little tentative nibbles at the compound in the pannikins. Have you ever been an exile, reader, at sea, in pr-s-n, or somewhere, where the simple needs of life cannot possibly be gratified ? If you have you will know how that sweet mush of cocoa tasted. It was like bubbling water in the desert, like fern fronds above cool springs, like the voice of the bird in the moonlight, in the green shadows, in some southern spice garden, drowsy with odours. It was like a night

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in June in the forest, by the babbling brook, when the moon rises, red and solemn, over the hills where the deer feed. Ah, the taste of it ! the scent of it ! the hidden meaning of it !

Then as I nibbled, the kettle would come to the boil and the brew would be made. My watch-mate would come below puffing his pipe, humming his favourite tune of "The Sailor's Wives." I would fill a pannikin and carry it aft to the boy on the poop, my watch-mate stationed there, keeping the time. Round us were the waters, dark and ghostly ; the crying sea-birds ; the whales with their pants and spoutings. There were the masts and the great sails filling and slatting. There were the sailors lying on the deck, their pipe-bowls ruddy in the blackness. There was the murmuring and talking sea, full of mysterious menace. And the sailors' quiet talk, and the smell of tar from the sailroom, and the man at the wheel abaft all, and the lame mate limping to the binnacle—it was all beautiful, solemn, sacred, like a thing in a dream. And then the taste of the brew, when one settled down in the half-deck. The talk we had, my sleepy mate and I ; talk of work and of ships, of topsails and mermaids, the old beautiful talk of youth, that needs but a listener to be brilliant.

*A Tarpaulin Muster.* April 1907.

## XXV

W. H. HUDSON

### In Patagonia

FURTHER on in my rambles I discover a nest of the large black leaf-cutting ant (*Ecodoma*) found over the entire South American continent—and a leading member of that social tribe of insects of which it has been said that they rank intellectually next to ourselves. Certainly this ant, in its actions, simulates man's intellect very closely, and not in the unpleasant manner of species having warrior castes and slaves. The leaf-cutter is exclusively agricultural in its habits, and constructs subterranean galleries, in which it stores fresh leaves in amazing quantities. The leaves are not eaten, but are cut up into small pieces and arranged in beds: these beds quickly become frosted over with a growth of minute fungus; this the ant industriously gathers and stores for use, and when the artificial bed is exhausted the withered leaves are carried out to make room for a layer of fresh ones. Thus the *Ecodoma* literally *grows* its own food, and in this respect appears to have reached a stage beyond the most highly developed ant communities hitherto described. Another interesting fact is that, although the leaf-cutters



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have a peaceful disposition, never showing resentment except when gratuitously interfered with, they are just as courageous as any purely predatory species, only their angry emotions and warlike qualities always appear to be dominated by reason and the public good. Occasionally a community of leaf-cutters goes to war with a neighbouring colony of ants of some other species; in this, as in everything else, they seem to act with a definite purpose and great deliberation. Wars are infrequent, but in all those I have witnessed—and I have known this species from childhood—the fate of the nation is decided in one great pitched battle. A spacious bare level spot of ground is chosen, where the contending armies meet, the fight raging for several hours at a stretch, to be renewed on several consecutive days. The combatants, equally sprinkled over a wide area, are seen engaged in single combat or in small groups, while others, non-fighters, run briskly about removing the dead and disabled warriors from the field of battle.

Perhaps some reader, who has made the acquaintance of nature in a London square, will smile at my wonderful ant story. Well, I have smiled too, and cried a little perhaps, when, witnessing one of these "decisive battles of the world," I have thought that the stable civilization of the *Ecodoma* ants will probably continue to flourish on the earth when our feverish dream of progress has ceased to vex it. Does that notion seem very fantastical? Might not such a thought have crossed the mind of some priestly Peruvian, idly watching the labours of a colony of leaf-cutters—a thousand years ago, let us say, before

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the canker had entered into his system to make it, long ere the Spaniard came, ripe for death? History preserves one brief fragment which goes to show that the Incas themselves were not altogether enslaved by the sublime traditions they taught the vulgar ; that they also possessed, like philosophic moderns, some conception of that implacable power of nature which orders all things, and is above Viracocha and Pachacamac and the majestic gods that rode the whirlwind and tempest, and had their thrones on the everlasting peaks of the Andes. Five or six centuries have probably made little change in the economy of the *Æcodoma*, but the splendid civilization of the children of the sun, albeit it bore on the face of it the impress of unchangeableness and endless duration, has vanished utterly from the earth.

To return from this digression. The nest I have discovered is more populous than London, and there are several roads diverging from it, each one four or five inches wide, and winding away hundreds of yards through the bushes. Never was any thoroughfare in a great city fuller of busy hurrying people than one of these roads. Sitting beside one, just where it wound over the soft yellow sand, I grew tired of watching the endless procession of little toilers, each one carrying a leaf in his jaws ; and very soon there came into my ear a whisper from somebody :

Who finds some mischief still  
For idle hands to do.

It is always pleasant to have even a hypothetical somebody on whom to shuffle the responsibility of our evil actions. Warning my conscience

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that I am only going to try a scientific experiment, one not nearly so cruel as many in which the pious Spallanzani took great delight, I scoop a deep pit in the sand ; and the ants, keeping on their way with their usual blind, stupid sagacity, tumble pell-mell over each other into it. On, on they come, in scores and in hundreds, like an endless flock of sheep jumping down a pit into which the crazy bell-wether has led the way : soon the hundreds have swelled to thousands, and the yawning gulf begins to fill with an inky mass of wriggling, biting, struggling ants. Every falling leaf-cutter carries down a few grains of treacherous sand with it, making the descent easier, and soon the pit is full to overflowing. In five minutes more they will all be out again at their accustomed labours, just a little sore about the legs, perhaps, where they have bitten one another, but no worse for their tumble, and all that will remain of the dreadful cavern will be a slight depression in the soil.

Satisfied with the result, I resume my solitary ramble, and by-and-by coming upon a fine Escandalosa bush I resolve to add incendiarism to my list of misdeeds. It might appear strange that a bush should be called Escandalosa, which means simply Scandalous, or, to prevent mistakes, which simply means Scandalous ; but this is one of those quaint names the Argentine peasants have bestowed on some of their curious plants—dry love, the devil's snuff-box, bashful weed, and many others. The Escandalosa is a wide-spreading shrub, three to five feet high, thickly clothed with prickly leaves, and covered all the year round with large pale-yellow immortal flowers ; and the

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curious thing about the plant is that when touched with fire it blazes up like a pile of wood shavings, and is immediately consumed to ashes with a marvellous noise of hissing and crackling. And thus the bush I have found burns itself up on my placing a lighted match at its roots.

I enjoy the spectacle amazingly while it lasts, the brilliant tongues of white flame darting and leaping through the dark foliage making a very pretty show; but presently, contemplating the heap of white ashes at my feet where the green miracle, covered with its everlasting flowers, flourished a moment ago, I begin to feel heartily ashamed of myself. For how have I spent my day? I remember with remorse the practical joke perpetrated on the simple-minded coots, also the consternation caused to a whole colony of industrious ants; for the idler looks impatiently on the occupations of others, and is always glad of an opportunity of showing up the futility of their labours. But what motive had I in burning this flowering bush that neither toiled nor spun, this slow-growing plant, useless amongst plants as I amongst my fellow-men? Is it not the fact that something of the spirit of our simian progenitors survives in us still? Who that has noticed monkeys in captivity—their profound inconsequent gravity and insane delight in their own unreasonableness—has not envied them their immunity from cold criticism? That intense relief which all men, whether grave or gay, experience in escaping from conventional trammels into the solitude, what is it, after all, but the delight of going back to nature, to be for a time, what we are always pining to be, wild animals,

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unconfined monkeys, with nothing to restrain us in our gambols, and with only a keener sense of the ridiculous to distinguish us from other creatures ?

But what, I suddenly think, if some person in search of roots and gums, or only curious to know how a field naturalist spends his days, gunless in the woods, should be secretly following and watching me all the time ?

I spring up alarmed, and cast my eyes rapidly around me. Merciful heavens ! what is that suspiciously human-looking object seventy yards away amongst the bushes ? Ah, relief inexpressible, it is only the pretty hare-like *Dolichotis patagonica* sitting up on his haunches, gazing at me with a meek wonder in his large round timid eyes.

The little birds are bolder and come in crowds, peering curiously from every twig, chirping and twittering with occasional explosions of shrill derisive laughter. I feel myself blushing all over my face ; their jeering remarks become intolerable, and, owl-like, I fly from their persecutions to hide myself in a close thicket. There, with grey-green curtains about and around me, I lie on a floor of soft yellow sand, silent and motionless as my neighbour the little spider seated on his geometric web, till the waning light and the flute of the tinamou send me home to supper.

*Idle Days in Patagonia.* 1893.

H. M. TOMLINSON

## The Upper Amazon

WE could go no further. Our steamer had left the sea weeks before, and had slowly serpentine her way into the heart of a continent. She had been persuaded over bars, she had waited patiently till floods gave her a chance to insinuate herself against the river current still deeper into this forest of the tropics. She had rounded bends so narrowly that her crew cheered derisively when her gear brought down showers of leaves and twigs from the overhanging front of the forest. When the monkeys answered our siren the bo'sun gave me a look, half appealing, half startled. But now we could go no further. We were nearly two thousand miles from the sea, and just ahead of us was an incline of foaming water. No ship had intruded into that solitude before ; beyond those cataracts, up into the unexplored wilderness, that river had its origin somewhere in the Andes of Bolivia.

There we anchored. Both anchors were out, because two were necessary. It was doubted that two were enough. Mr. Bullock, the mate, was complaining bitterly. I was standing with him on the forecastle head, and we were both

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watching the taut cables, which at times were tremulous in the strain of the current. "A nice thing," he said, "a nice thing. Ever see anything like it before? It isn't right."

What he was pointing to was certainly unusual. It is not right, or at least it is most irregular, for forest rubbish to gather in such a mass against a ship's cables that the danger of something coming adrift is evident. "Ever see anything like it? Eh? I bet you haven't, mister. It isn't right. Trees and bamboos and meadows—a whole raft of it, like a day in the country. All it wants is a few cows. And what's going to happen if she drags, in this place? No steam and the damned jungle under our counter. We should have to rot here, mister, for we'd never get her off. We're out of touch of everything civilized."

So it seemed. Not only were great trees caught against the cables, but the trees were in green leaf. They were clouds of leaves, and perhaps birds were still perched in them. A few acres of top-heavy forest had collapsed into the river the night before, and there it was, or what was left of it, verdant and dense. No doubt more of it was to come.

"That's a new job for a sailor," commented Mr. Bullock. "Clearing away a copse from a ship's bows. I shall have to get a boat away to see to that."

An area of the tangle, a stretch of meadow and a height of foliage, became agitated, and detached itself in the pull of the stream as we watched. It foundered a little, uplifted again, pivoted in a half-circle, came free, and went

## THE UPPER AMAZON

swiftly by the length of the ship, a travelling island. Behind it swam a peccary.

"There you are," exclaimed the excited mate. "What did I tell you? Pigs, mister. We'll get the whole farmyard in a minute."

Next morning the surrounding forest seemed to have gone. We had nothing but an opaque silence about us. The vapours of the miasmatic solitude shrouded the high palisades of trees and leaves. Somewhere the sun had just risen, and the mist was luminous. Imperceptibly the white steam rose, till the bottom of the forest across the water was plain. The jungle looked as though it were sheered off a few feet above the bank in a straight line. But the curtain rose quickly as I watched. To starboard again was the towering and ominous barrier of still leaves and fronds, the place where no man had ever landed. The sun looked at us. Languor fell over the ship. The parrots and the monkeys cried aloud for a minute or two, and then the sky became silent. It was no place for a ship. That was an unpleasant word of the mate's, that we should rot. The sensation in that heated stillness, where there was nothing for us to do but to wait, was certainly of ferment and stagnation. The ironwork of the steamer felt like the plates of an oven.

On the poop, under an awning, the steward was spreading our breakfast. The captain appeared, a slim and stooping figure in white linen and a Panama hat, and walked towards me, fingering his grey beard as he eyed things about him. He did not wear the expression of a man who would respond to a hearty "good-morning." He rested his hands on the bulwark and looked



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overside, contemplating the stream. He stopped by the open door of the Chief's cabin, and wondered to the engineer whether it might not be wise to rig a dam round the rudder, so that wreckage might not get entangled with the propeller. It was at that moment that pandemonium broke out in the bunkers. The noise rose through a bunker hatch, which was open for ventilation—yells, clanging of shovels, crowbars ringing on bulkheads, shouts, and hysterical laughter. The Chief came out in his pyjamas, and the three of us peered down into the twilight below.

The Chief bawled commands to his men. There was no answer. The infernal scuffling and clanging below went on. Then as suddenly it stopped. The Chief cried down peremptorily, and the stokers heard him. One of them appeared below us, a blackened gnome, his dirty mask veined with pink where the sweat ran. He was panting. When he saw the stern faces above him he showed a broad white smile.

"All right, sir, we've done him in. Took some doin' though."

"What the hell do you mean? What's this row about?"

The man vanished. Some whispering went on under the deck. Then several stokers appeared, hauling on a rope. It had a great snake at the end of it, its head limp, its body gashed. The hilarious stokers kicked and shoved the dead twelve feet of it into coils which we could inspect from above.

"There you are, sir," said one of the showmen. "That's it. All right to find that in the coal,

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ain't it? You ought to have seen the way he scrapped. . . . And don't forget we didn't sign on to kill boa-constrictors, sir," added a quiet voice from the dark.

"I don't wonder at it," said the mate at breakfast. "Crawled in by a hawse-pipe, of course. The ship will get full of 'em with that green stuff about the cables."

"Glad to hear it. That will give us some compensation, captain," our surgeon commented. "Otherwise we should be dull here." The surgeon's mind was inclined to curiosity in wayward things, and he always kept a butterfly-net handy. "One of the men this morning showed me a wound on his elbow. It was hard to stop the bleeding. He didn't know how he got it, and I didn't tell him. But there are vampire bats in the fo'c'sle."

The captain gave an impatient exclamation and blamed the surgeon for frivolity. "Bats! Vampire bats! You talk like a novelist, doctor. Never head of bats in a fo'c'sle. You're thinking of belfries."

The surgeon chuckled. "You'll hear all right, captain, when the men find out."

The captain grumbled through all the meal. Place didn't smell like a ship, smelt like a hot-house. Nice place to be in. In all his years at sea, nothing like it. Another charter like this, and the owner could look after the boa-constrictors himself. "Mr. Mate, just keep the men from thinking too much about it. A good time now to get some of that work done."

For me after breakfast, with the decorative office of supercargo, there was no work. There

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was only the forest to look at, the yellow flood with its flotsam, and the river ahead tumultuous and gleaming in the rapids. The heat increased. The silence was a heavy weight. One felt a little fearful because so much forest made no sound whatever, no more sound than if it had been a dream, not a murmur nor the rustle of a leaf. It was quite still, like an illusion of trees. We might have made a ridiculous escape to the world's end, and now were a little scared, not knowing what to make of it.

The only movement was the tumult of the cataracts, a glittering and flashing about a mass of black rocks. But that gave no sense that water was falling, but only that it was inclined, for its pour never ended. Beyond those rapids there was nothing; only trees and the sun. Nobody had ever been there. There was no reason why a man should go. The summit of the cataracts, where black triangles of waves above our heads continually leaped but never seemed to descend, was the edge of the world. While I was gazing at that line of leaping waves, which stretched between the high barriers of the forest, the figure of a man appeared there. He poised for an instant on the verge, in the centre of the line, against the sky, arms stretched out as if in appeal, and then vanished in the spray below.

"See that?" exclaimed the Chief. He hurried along to me. "See him? That must have been an Indian. Couldn't stop himself there. Can you see him now?"

We could not. We could see only the incline of heaving water. We must have been mistaken, and were beginning to argue about it when

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an object came slowly away from the foot of the falls. It was an overturned canoe. A swimmer righted it, got in, and began to paddle towards us.

The man came alongside, standing up in his scallop, stark-naked, a paddle in his hand, grinning. I thought he must be of some unnamed tribe. He was a little lighter in colour than an Indian, but his curly black hair and beard made him remarkably different. The natives never have beards, though that difference was not so astonishing as his light-hearted grin, which was absurdly familiar in that laughless and inhuman wild. He did not speak, but airily waved his hand as he came alongside, and grabbed our Jacob's ladder. Up he came, in leisured nonchalance.

"Pardon me," he said, as he stood up, still smiling, before our gaping company of seamen, his fine body glistening. "Anybody lend me a pair of pants?"

Our captain was frowning at him in wonder, but at that he grimaced. "Come aft," he said. The brown figure nodded to us in good-humour, and followed the captain, stepping like a god. He turned, as he was about to descend the companion, and gazed at our house-flag. You may see profiles like his in any collection of Greek antiquities. When he had gone we leaned overside to stare at his dug-out canoe, hitched to our ladder. There was nothing in it but some arrows and a bow, and a machete, all lashed to a peg.

The stranger, that night, came with the Chief to my cabin. He inspected our books in evident enjoyment. "Books!" he said. "Books, here!"

"You know," he continued, looking round at us, "I thought I'd gone light-headed when I saw

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your ship below the falls. I was so surprised that a jerk sent me overside, and I came down the rapids with an arm over the canoe. I was sure I was going to miss meeting you after all. Too bad!"

He gave us his name. It was that of a learned English judge. I reminded him of that. "Oh yes. My father. He'd have been amused if he'd seen me this morning. Is he all right?"

He was quite cool about it. This sort of thing, I gathered from his manner, might happen to anybody. "Never expected to meet Christians at a place like this."

Where had he come from? "Mollendo," he replied, rolling a cigarette.

Was the man a liar? Mollendo was a thousand miles away on the Pacific side. The Andes were between us. The youngster saw our doubt, and smiled. "Yes," he said. "Mollendo. And I crossed the Andes, though don't you do it unless you want to. This side of them I lost my gun. Lost everything. Got a canoe and some arrows and a bow, and here I am. You know," he went on, "you can shoot fish with an arrow. I'll show you in the morning. That's how I lived, when I wasn't with the natives."

"Is that all?" I asked. I thought of the rumours of cannibals and head-hunters, and the stories of what was in store for those who ventured alone into the region beyond us.

"Well," he said, taking down a book to see what it was, "well . . . it took some months. It's a bad country. But I say! Fancy your knowing my dad. I thought I was quite out of touch here."

*Gifts of Fortune.* 1926.

## XXVII

A. F. TSCHIFFELY

### The Peruvian Coast

FROM Ancon north, practically to the border of Ecuador, I had planned to follow the coast. Rains are almost unknown in these regions, in fact, there are parts where people have never seen rain fall. A few towns and villages stand on the rivers that run down from the Andes and cross the dry coast to the sea, and when these rivers are high they are very wild and dangerous. Some of the valleys are watered by small irrigation canals, and where such irrigation exists, fine crops of sugar-cane, cotton, and rice are grown. Between the distant rivers are the vast, sandy deserts where nothing grows and where the sand dunes rise one after another, like huge ocean billows. In such places the heat is terrific, and there is absolutely no water. The ancient Mochica Indians, later the Chimus, and then the Incas, had irrigated many of the regions which are now empty deserts, and I saw the ruins of their towns, forts, canals, and burial grounds, which tell the sad story of the white man's invasion.

Contrary to the practice of most travellers in dry regions, I carried no water. For my own

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use I had a flask of brandy, and another filled with lemon juice mixed with a little salt. This concoction was very stimulating, but tasted so bad that I was never tempted to drink much at a time. The juice of canned fresh tomatoes is probably the best thirst quencher, but then this article is rarely found when it is needed. As for the horses, I calculated that the energy wasted by them in carrying water would be greater than the actual benefit derived from drinking it, so they only drank when we came to a river or some village. I believe my theory was sound; with a light load we gained in speed, and avoided the horses getting sore, for water is the most uncomfortable and clumsy load a pack animal can carry. Only on rare occasions did the animals seem to suffer from excessive thirst.

After leaving Ancon we travelled over high sand dunes, and at eventide, in a fertile plain, we arrived at a big "hacienda" belonging to a Chinaman, whose hospitality I shall never forget. The next day's trip being a long one we started long before daybreak. When I saddled up I thought my saddle-bags were rather heavier than usual, and later I found out that my kind host had filled them with all sorts of good things during the night.

The first rays of dawn found us among sand dunes where the horses sank deep into the soft sand that had been blown about by the wind until it appeared like ripples on a lake. The imposing silence was broken only by the rolling of the waves that sounded like the snoring of some sleeping giant. The wind almost immediately covered our tracks, and soon the terrible heat

## THE PERUVIAN COAST

rose in waves, making breathing uncomfortable. In some places I could follow the coast, riding along the wet sand, where I made the horses go at a fast trot or even at a slow gallop, for I knew that this would be impossible once the sun rose higher; and time was precious. Sometimes a wave, bigger than the average, would wash higher up the beach, and the moving foam would frighten the horses. The vastness of the ocean, and the regular roaring of the waves on the seemingly endless and glittering beach, and the rolling sand dunes, gave the impression of eternity. Thousands of sea birds hovered silently over our heads, and crabs of all sizes went running with amazing swiftness towards their holes in the sand as we approached. Their manner of walking sideways was almost comical, and often, whilst I gave the horses a few minutes to breathe, I amused myself trying to catch some of them. Once or twice I threw a dead one as far as I could, then watched the others come to devour it; the fights that ensued were fierce and terrible, and I could not help comparing these fighting crabs with human beings. The wet sand was white with sea-gulls waiting for the waves to wash up something to eat. The birds would only rise when we had almost reached them, fly in a small circle around us, invariably towards sea, where the wind came from, and again settle behind us. Thousands of guanos (a kind of sea bird) were flying in regular clouds, dashing and splashing into the water after fish, for all the world resembling aeroplanes in the moment of crashing; and every now and again a curious seal would come to the surface and look at us as if wondering



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what we were doing there. The hot and very bright sunlight reflected off the wet sand and the waves, and the snow-white gulls circling silently around us made my eyes smart, obliging me to wear the green goggles I had used in the mountains. Journeys through such deserts were trying in the extreme. At first the body suffers, then everything physical becomes abstract. Later on the brain becomes dull and the thoughts mixed ; one becomes indifferent about things, and then everything seems like a moving picture or a strange dream, and only the will to arrive and to keep awake is left. All thinking ceases, and when one finally arrives and falls to sleep, even the will temporarily leaves the body.

Dante's *Inferno* is a creation of stupendous imagination, but the Peruvian deserts are real ; very real.

*Southern Cross to Pole Star.* 1933.

## XXVIII

PAUL MORAND

(*Translated by Desmond Flower*)

### Lake Titicaca

ON a dark and sinister night in heavy rain, I left the Peruvian port of Puno, where the elaborate cathedral stands among reeds in the muddy lagoon that forms the edge of Lake Titicaca. Bound for La Paz, I had embarked on the *Inca*, a steamer brought from England and dragged bit by bit to this altitude of twelve thousand five hundred feet. Through a storm belt a hundred miles wide we felt our way across this sheet of water, the highest in the world, this black sea of which the Spanish were so afraid they preferred to make a detour rather than cross it.

Titicaca means "tin stone," and indeed the waters of this "suspended Mediterranean" have just the thick immobility of liquid tin; it is part of the mountain, caught in the same vein, heavy with the same metal. A desert of water, between reddish banks, reflecting a deserted sky.

Titicaca, an aerial lake so deep that it is useless to cast anchor; perched so high and flogged by such storms that the traveller suffers from sea-

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sickness and mountain sickness at the same time. On these dead astral waters I passed the most exultant hours of my journey, in a fit of hilarious well-being, a complete detachment. The Andes, covered with ice and cinders, appeared like glorious bodies, sublimated by abstinence and fasting. I watched the whitest clouds in the world and the horizon with its jagged saw-teeth—the Grand Cordillera—at which the tropical storms of the Amazon stop. I reflected that beyond that wall of pure steel I could, after a day's descent, reach the virgin forest. It is of this contrast that the ineffable beauty of Titicaca is composed; this perfect, unpolluted mirror ignores the infections of the richer soils; from the heights of one of the oldest countries in the world, it towers above the alluvions and affluents of the Amazon, where dwell giant spiders, leprosy, mosquitoes, and, by rivers that flow rustling through lianas, those naked Indians armed with blow-pipes who are undoubtedly the last American savages. From this lake, says pre-Inca mythology, the sun rose for the first time as soon as the Creator had separated day from night. It is a lake of mystery and magic, in which geographers see nothing but a partition of waters between the Pacific and the Atlantic, but which tradition designates as the holy place of the birth of mankind. A civilization about which nothing is known has left its gigantic bones, in the form of ruined temples, on the Bolivian shore of the lake, and perhaps its last survivors in the isolated Uros tribe, the despair of ethnographers, that lives in the valley of Desaguadero, a depository of rivers without egress. It was on one of the thirty-six

## LAKE TITICACA

islands that there appeared one day the ancestor of the Incas, with long ears. Was it perhaps on the island of the Sun, the island of Coati, or the island of the Moon that they shut up the virgins of the blood royal—in the islands of fasting and convents or on the almost separated promontory of Copacabana, with its dolmens, celebrated for the half-Christian, half-pagan ceremonies of its pilgrimages after the harvest in August, when the priests officiate on the same stones that once ran with the blood of the black llama? I have crossed Titicaca four times, without taking my eyes from its heavy waters, where lie for ever the treasures which were flung into it at the first sound of Pizarro's arquebuses. I have seen on it the loveliest sunset of my life, behind the black hills chiselled against a rusty sky shadowed with violet; a sombre line traced by the reeds, while far away the peaks stretched whiter than sugar. The sky, pierced by a flight of ducks, passed from gold to saffron, from saffron to rose, from rose to red, from red to that shade that they call liver; then everything glowed like cane alcohol when it catches fire. Night followed fast with tints of dove and steel grey, while a pile of apocalyptic cumuli wandered towards a background of blue drawn from the palette of Nattier, and so gave way to those fleecy clouds of pink that decorate the ceilings of Bavarian rococo.

Next morning, in the stillness and light of a dawn delivered from the storm, who can imagine the happy exultation of this awakening of the Andes? Clearness, a pulse of 130 . . . but every brisk movement reverberating on the brow like a gong-stroke. Across the celadon surface of the

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waters came to meet me those famous boats of straw, the *balsas*, steered by a fisherman astride, his feet trailing in the water, just as Pizarro saw them. Their rigging, their sails, square like the sail of a sampan—everything is straw, knit with the reeds of the lake. These gondolas with the exquisite line and wide flanks are edged with a thick pad that makes them unsinkable ; they are the only life of this immense sheet of water, so destitute of birds.

To the right, through the lagoons of Tiahuanaco and Uinamarca our prow pushed aside the masses of reeds that leave a fishy smell ; so we arrived at Guaqui, the frontier port. There I found Bolivian Indians clad in much more glaring colours and more picturesque garments than the Indians of Peru ; I was astonished by their Basque clothes and their pleated dresses retaining the lines of sixteenth-century Spain—jonquil, carnation, crimson and green of a startling violence beneath the rainbow ponchos. The women, the *cholas*, wear high-laced boots and tall felt hats, while the men have Phrygian bonnets, red and orange, with ear-pieces, like the Mongol cap of the Soviet infantry. A car took me into La Paz ; it was Sunday—market day in each village through which we passed. Two or three hundred Indians were gathered in the square ; no noise, shouting, or altercation could be heard, only the confused murmuring of crowds, like a fair of phantoms. These Indians squat in the Oriental fashion, and their head appears through the hole cut in their red wool garment (the cross cut of man's first attire, perpetuated in the ancient tunic, the Byzantine robe, the Arab gandourah, the priest's

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chasuble, and the Indian poncho). The women, sitting in front of their slabs of rock salt and piles of frozen potatoes or bananas from the hot provinces, also sell pharmaceutic roots, bundles of coca, and big mushrooms, split with a hatchet, that are used for fuel. I learnt to judge these ladies' age by the number of garments that they wore, as one judges the age of a tree when it is felled by the concentric rings.

These Indians have the immobile beauty of the Andes. With one look they would show us their contempt or, in turning away, their dislike. They puff out their chests, distended by the rarefied air. Their faces are the colour of dried blood, of war-tattooing, the colour of the convulsive monsters in primitives of the Fujiwara School, the colour of those congested persons who march round Etruscan vases or who appear as demons on Tibetan banners.

*Indian Air.* 1933.

## XXIX

WILLIAM BEEBE

### No-Man's-Land Five Fathoms Down

OF all places in the world a coral reef is unquestionably the newest and the strangest from which to draw satiety in colour.

When I first began going down beneath tropical waters in my diving helmet, I found myself reliving the cave-man's evolution. Whether the nearest coral was warm buff or primuline yellow was quite subservient to the fact that it might shelter a lynx-eyed octopus, and until I learned to know better, the sight of an approaching shark sent messages to portions of my brain far other than the seat of appreciation of colour and beauty. It was necessary to get used to the strange costume, the complete submergence under water, and the excitement of a new world of unknown life.

In the course of time I have learned to tramp about coral reefs, twenty to thirty feet under water, so unconcernedly that I can pay attention to particular, definite things. But after all my silly fears have been allayed, even now, with eyes overflowing with surfeit of colour, I am still almost inarticulate. We need a whole new vocabulary, new adjectives, adequately to describe the designs and colours of under sea.

## NO-MAN'S-LAND FIVE FATHOMS DOWN

The very medium of water prevents any garishness, its pastel perspective compels most exquisite harmony of tints. Filtered through its softness, the harshest, most gaudy parrot-fish resolves into the delicacy of an old Chinese print, an age-mellowed tapestry. If one asks for modernist or futuristic designs, no opium dream can compare with a batfish or an angry octopus. The night overhead glories in a single moon; here whole schools of silvery moonfish rise, pass and set before us, while at our feet rest constellations of star-fish—crimson, sepia, and mauve.

An unreal, fairy fish of greens and blues and purples appears in the distance, vanishes forever, yet the next moment is close to the glass of our helmet, peering in at us, mouthing soundless *Oh's!* We try to catch him, with the same success as snatching a sunbeam from the upper air. As he balances calmly, easily, in mid-water, we count the distinct colours on his scales, and stop at the fourteenth, for he has shifted slightly and every single tint and hue has altered.

I walk toward a coral palace in the distance and work more magic. It is of the most delicately tinted lavender, picked out with patches of orange. I lean closer to get the exact shade, when every particle of colour vanishes—the feathery-headed worms whose tentacles covered the surface have withdrawn like lightning into their tubes, and I see that the orange was merely reflection, and that the coral is actually salmon-pink. My hand now brushes the surface, and between winks the thousands of minute polyps disappear within their stony home, revealing at last the beautiful clear ivory of the real coral. Bewildered



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after this three-ply palimpsest of colour, I look aside just in time to see a fish, in brilliant shining blue with three broad, vertical bands of brown, swim slowly into a fairy cavern. A few minutes later the identical fish emerges clad in brilliant yellow, thickly covered with black polka-dots.

This spirit of astonishing happenings, of exquisite magic, of ineffable, colourful mystery is the theme of this watery world, and should be the chief *motif* in any writing or painting inspired or influenced by it. For while the roses and peonies of our gardens may look differently in light and in shade, they certainly, when alarmed, do not dash into the ground; and when we see a tortoise-shell tabby disappear into an alley, we can be reasonably sure that it will emerge practically the same colour.

One artist, Zarh Pritchard, has brought to canvas, evanescence of hue, tenuousness of tint eminently satisfying to the memory of the stroller among coral reefs. This is probably because he paints under water, seated among his subjects. No aquarium tank can ever show the pastel film of aquatic perspective. No glass-bottomed boat ever conveys the mystery and beauty of this underworld of colour, for the same reason that an exhibit of pictures viewed from a gallery directly overhead can reveal nothing but frames and fore-shortened canvases.

Time after time I have come out of the water with my mind crowded with colour impressions—but never primary, harsh reds or blues or greens. Now, too, I realize the importance to an author of the ultimate connection between colours and their man-given names. Striving to fix and iden-

## NO-MAN'S-LAND FIVE FATHOMS DOWN

tify remembered hues of a coral grove, I lose faith in my memory when, in my colour book, I find them listed as Russian blue or onion-skin pink. I know the exact shade of a certain feathery sea plume, but resent having to refer to it as zinc orange. Yet I am always pleased when I detect salmon, or pearl-grey, or ultramarine. How I wish that the inventors of the names of colours had been imbued with the simplicity and the imagination of those who, through all the years, have acted as little Adams to the flowers.

*Beneath Tropic Seas.* 1928.

## XXX

ALDOUS HUXLEY

### On the Ship

LIQUID opal, the genuine antique, contemporary golf courses (twenty of them in Hawaii alone), the last word in cocktail bars and peach-pink sanitary fittings—the blurb writers promise to take you into the very heart of all these variegated delights. But what they fail to mention—and for me it seems one of the most significant things about the whole business—is the fact that a winter cruise takes you into the future as well. For when you board a giant hostess, you find yourself in the world of your grandchildren. The five hundred inhabitants of a cruising liner are in no sense a typical example of the contemporary population ; no, they are a typical sample of the population as it will be, unless in the meantime we are all blown to pieces, fifty years hence. For the gay and charming front-pagers who go on winter cruises are, in the main, elderly people. Retired or merely tired business men and their wives ; widows with competences and ageing spinsters, trying to escape from winter and loneliness in the well-advertised companionableness of deck life in the tropics ; a sprinkling of the very old and infirm. The genuinely young are few ;

## ON THE SHIP

but, by way of compensation, the imitation youthfulness of early middle age is plentiful. Adolescents of five-and-forty abound. Such, then, are the front-pagers. By no means, I repeat, a characteristic example of the contemporary population. But, according to the prophecies of all the experts, a completely typical bunch from the gay nineteen-eighties.

In 1980 the population of the Western world will probably be somewhat smaller than it is at present. It will also, which is more significant, be differently constituted. The birth-rate will have declined and the average age of death have risen. This means that there will be a considerable decrease in the numbers of children and young people, and a considerable increase in the numbers of the middle-aged and old. Little boys and girls will be relatively rare; but men, and especially women (since women tend to live longer than men), of sixty-five years old and upwards will be correspondingly more plentiful—as plentiful as they are on a cruising liner in 1933.

So all aboard the giant hostess and Westward Ho! for a glamorous adventure into the future. But, frankly, I prefer the present. Little boys may be an intolerable nuisance; but when they are not there we regret them, we find ourselves homesick for their very intolerableness. After two or three weeks of a winter cruise (there are some, appalling thought! which last as much as four months), one would gladly exchange the widows, the bulging ex-stockbrokers, the small but thrifty young kittens of forty, for a wagon-load of even the most diabolic children, for a wilderness of even the silliest under-graduates.

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What a world our grandchildren will have to live in. Opinions, on the decks of a cruising liner, are unbelievably sound. It would seem impossible to find in any other area of equal size so large a number of right-thinking men and women. If similar causes continue to result in similar effects, our grandchildren's world will be a world of die-hards. As the young grow fewer and the old more numerous, the mistrust of all radical opinions will tend to increase, the desire for change to diminish. It will probably be safer than ours, the world of 1980 ; but it will certainly be less exciting. Go cruising and judge for yourself.

*Beyond the Mexique Bay.* 1934.

## XXXI

MARY AUSTIN

### Cactus Country

Not all the country that the cactus takes, belongs to it. That gipsy of the tribe, the prickly-pear, goes as far east and north on the great plains as the Spanish adventurer ever went, perhaps farther. It goes as a rarity into Old World gardens, runs wild and thrives wherever there are sand and sun to bring its particular virtues into play. For the virtue of all cacti is that they represent the ultimate adaptations of vegetative life on its way up from its primordial home in the sea shallows, to the farthest, driest land. The prickly-pears—*Opuntia* is their family name, and the connection is a large one—run to arid wastes as gipsies do to the wilds, not because there the environment is the only one which will tolerate them, but because it is the one in which all the cactus tribe find themselves fulfilled, triumphant.

Here, in the country below the Mogollon Rim, the business of plants in making this a livable world, goes on all open to the light, not covered and confused by the multiplicity of its manifestations, as in the lush, well-rained-on lands. Here, in this veritable corner of south-western Arizona,

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it has travelled the perfect round, from the filmed protoplasmic cell, by all the paths of plant complexity, to the high simplicity of the great king cactus, the sahuaro.

Going west by the Old Trails Road, you do not begin to find sahuaro until you are well down toward the black hills of Tucson, and it is not at its best this side of the toad-like heap of volcanic trap which turns the river out of its course, called Tummomoc. Here it rises to a height of twenty-five or thirty feet, erect, columnar, dull green, and deeply fluted, the outer ridges of the flutings set with rows of lateral spines that inclose it as in a delicate greyish web. Between the ridges the sahuaro has a texture like well-surfaced leather, giving back the light like spears, that, seen from a rapidly moving car, make a continuous vertical flicker in the landscape. Marching together against the rose-and-vermilion evening, they have a stately look, like the pillars of ruined temples.

For the first hundred years or so the sahuaro preserves the outline of its virgin intention to be straight, but in the case of wounding, or perhaps in seasons of excess, it puts forth without calculation immense columnar branches like the arms of candelabra, curving to bring their growing tips parallel to the axis of the main stem, which they reproduce as if from their own roots.

The range of the sahuaro is restricted. Beginning with isolated specimens about the San Pedro River, it spreads south and west, but the true sahuaro forests are not reached until the gate of Papagueria is past, or the flats of Salt River. A small plantation of them has crossed the Colorado and established itself in California.

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South they pass into Sonora as far as Altár, and approach almost to the gulf shore, where they are replaced by the still more majestic *sowesa*.

The leafless, compact outline of the sahuaro, its erect habit and indurated surfaces give it a secret look. Surmounting the crest of one of these denuded desert ranges, or marching up nearly vertical slopes without haste or stooping, or pushing its way imperturbably toward the sun from the midst of cat-claw and mesquite and palo-verde, it has the effect of being forever outside the community of desert life. Yet such is the succulence of its seedlings, that few of them would survive the first two or three seasons without the shelter of the spiny undergrowth. Once the recurved spines have spread and stiffened across the smooth, infolded intervals, the sahuaro is reasonably safe, even from the hard-mouthed cattle of the desert ranges. In very dry years, small rodents will gnaw into the flutings as far up as they can creep between the spines. High up out of reach of all marauders, the woodpecker drills his holes in the pulpy outer mass; but against these the sahuaro protects itself by surrounding its wounds with pockets of woody fiber woven to the shape of the woodpecker's burrow.

Indians of that country will often remove these pocket linings before the fiber has hardened, and make use of them for household containers, or you may find them kicking about the sand, hard as oak-knots, long after the sahuaro that wove them has sloughed off its outer layer in decay. For the woodpecker never penetrates to the sahuaro core, enclosed as it is in a tube of woody, semi-detached ribs which remain standing long



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after the spongy masses that fill and surround it have completely desiccated, slowly fraying out outward from the top as the ribs part, until at last the Papago carries them away to roof his house or his family tomb.

In the vast *abras* of southern Arizona, there is no woody growth capable of furnishing the woodpecker with the cool, dark house in which he brings up his broods. In a single unbranched sahuaro near Casa Grande, this year, I counted seventeen woodpeckers' holes, ranged up and down like the little openings of the cliff-dwellers' caves. Frequently the vacated apartments of the sahuaro skyscraper will be occupied by the pygmy owl, who may have made a meal of the eggs or young birds before he established his own family there. Everywhere, from the sahuaro towers, little blue-headed hawks may be seen perching, or, from the vantage of their height, launching swift predatory flights. But when in the crotch of some three-hundred-year-old specimen the fierce red-tail has made his nest, you will find all that neighbourhood vacant of bird life.

It is not easy to take the life of a sahuaro, even when, just to see the tiny wavering flame run up the ridges, you set a match to the rows of oily spines. Even uprooted, as it may be in torrential seasonal rains, the prostrate column has unmeasured powers of living on its stored waters, and making an upward turn of its growing tip. One such I found at the back of Indian Oasis, toward Topohua, which had turned and budded after what must have been several seasons of overthrow.

If the column is by any accident broken, lateral

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branches start from the wound and curve upward toward the sun. Successive dry years constrict its columnar girth, as successive wet ones swell it, tracing in the undulations of the vertical outline a record of three or four centuries of rain. Around Tucson there must be sahuaros that could tell what sort of weather it was the year Father Kino came to the founding of San Xavier, and at Salt River I made my siesta under one that could have given a better guess than any of our archæologists at what became of the ancient civilizations of Casa Grande and Los Muertos.

For I suppose the sahuaro harvest, and the ceremonial making of sahuaro wine to be the oldest food festival of the cactus country. In the excavations of the buried cities of the Great-house culture, buried before the queen was born whose jewels opened the portals of the West, they found little brown jars hermetically sealed with clay, after the fashion in which Papago housewives preserve sahuaro syrup at Cobabi and Quitovaquita.

From the month of the Cold Touching Mildly to the Inner Bone Month of the winter, the flutings of sahuaro stems are folded deep. With the first of the rains they begin to expand, until, if the season is propitious, the smooth leathery surfaces are tight as drums. In May, on the blunt crowns, on the quarter most exposed to the sun, buds appear like clusters of green figs, close-packed as if in a platter. About this time red-tailed hawks, in their shelterless nests in the tallest crotches, will be hatching their young, and the quail in pairs going house-hunting in and out of the *garamboyas*. Within a week or two the green

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fig-shaped buds open, one by one, in filmy white-rayed circles, deep-yellow hearted, the haunt of innumerable flies. By the latter part of June or July the delicate corollas are replaced by fig-shaped fruits that as they curl open when fully ripe, revealing the full-seeded, crimson pulp, have the effect of a second vivid flowering.

Just before the fruits burst, however, the Pima and Papago women turn out by villages to harvest them with long hooks made of a sahuaro rib and a cross-piece of acacia twig. Often to save labour, they will peel the fruit as they collect it ; returning at night with their great jars and baskets overflowing with the luscious juicy pulp. For this, and for all that I have written of the sahuaro festival in Papagueria, it is counted a crime to destroy a sahuaro.

There is a singular charm of the sahuaro forest, a charm of elegance, as the wind, moving like royalty across the well-spaced intervals, receives the courtesies of ironwood and ocotilla and palo-verde. It begins with the upright next-of-blood, with a stately rocking of the tall pillars on their roots, and a soft ss-ss-ss of the wind along their spiny ridges. Suddenly the bright blossom-tips of the ocotilla take flight like flocks of scarlet birds, as the long wands bow and recover in the movement of the wind, and after an appreciable interval the thin-leaved ironwood rustles and wrestles with it, loth to let it go, until it drops with almost a sullen note to the stiff whisper of the palo-verde.

*The Land of Journeys' Ending.* 1925.

## XXXII

STELLA BENSON

### Those United States

NOBODY but a true fool tries to cross the United States in a Ford car in the middle of winter. Fools in a minor degree do it fairly often in summer, but the fools who cross in winter are the princes of their kind. We are converted to this doctrine now ; yet, with our folly and forty-six hundred miles safely in our past, we are rather proud of being princes of our kind.

There are several highways across the North American continent, and this fact alone fools travellers. Highway is a word with an easy and comfortable sound to the ears of all but those who have already motored across the States. Actually the use of the word in this connection is an act of faith, and very beautiful. It means that some day Ford-errants, or their successors, will be able to run singing, without changing gears, on a road like a taut wire stretched from the sunrise to the sunset. Let us not dwell on the disappointing fact that, by that time, all the trans-continental fools will be inefficiently using aeroplanes, and the only improvement will be that they will fall into air-pockets instead of bog-holes,

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and so end their folly and their difficulties once and for all. At present, however, the winter highway is very inadequate as a way and can hardly be called high. The winter route must be the most southerly possible and, on the "Old Spanish Trail," the Continental Divide is only six thousand feet high. Mostly the trail burrows in swamps like a mud-turtle, ploughs its way humbly through deep unstable sands or explores the edges of dead inland seas and slow red rivers.

These are the states through which we passed: N.Y., N.J., Pa., Del., Md., D.C., Va., N.C., S.C., Ga., Ala., Miss., La., Tex., N.M., Ariz., and Calif. I hope this is perfectly clear.

Humility is the first thing expected of a Ford owner. It is the last thing the Ford owner feels. We have never before owned anything that ran on wheels but, now that we own a Ford called Stephanie, Pierce Arrows and Rolls Royces are nothing to us. Believe it or not—on a good road we could pass every known make of car except a Ford, and nothing but a Ford ever dared to pass us.

Stephanie is the newest model; her voice is like that of the nightjar in midsummer; her profile is Grecian in its exquisite simplicity. She hails from Connecticut and bears her state nameplate under her chin and at the nape of her neck. Homesick natives of Connecticut State constantly come up to her and, patting her lovingly on her hot muzzle, say, "Say, sister, I'm from Connecticut too. What's your hometown?" Then Stephanie regretfully, and with an acquired British accent, has to confess that she has naturalized as an alien.

## THOSE UNITED STATES

Although so young, Stephanie has seen a great deal of life. She started from New York. When she started, we scarcely knew one knob on her figure from another, and the uses of almost all knobs were hidden from us. So we hired a man called Al to drive us down to Philadelphia, explaining the knob-psychology of Stephanie as he drove. Unfortunately Al proved to have an important engagement which dragged him from us just as we approached the outlying suburbs of Philadelphia and threw him into the New York train. We still had twenty miles to go. Stephanie sat smiling like a black devil where her faithless driver had left her. Since I had spent a longer time in the front seat than S. I now dubiously assumed the responsibility of driving. A Ford, we had been told, was fool-proof, and I was certainly a fool within the meaning of the act. I knocked a few knobs about—Stephanie moved. . . . Proudly hopeful that we were so far in no way distinguishable from the hundred million (or so) other Ford owners of the United States, we drove to Broad Street. We did not know the way to Radnor—our destination—but Broad Street looked a purposeful—almost a fool-proof—street. Rain streaked the wind-shield; all the outside world was a-dazzle and a-squirm seen through the glass. The darkness and the lights and the polished road were splintered in our confused sight. But still we moved successfully.

Something was wrong. I had committed a crime. Stephanie had committed a crime. Every one in the world was shouting at us. Two policemen were running towards us gesturing insanely,

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each shouting something different out of one corner of his mouth.

" Say, where was you raised ? "

" Say, can't you see the sign ? "

" Say, when you gwineter wake up ? "

Stephanie suddenly fainted and, as she did so, the position became dreadfully clear. In docile obedience to some nod, beck, or wreathed smile from a policeman, all the other automobiles going up and down Broad Street had stopped. Alone, Stephanie had proceeded innocently across an oasis of forbidden ground and now had fainted upon a tram-line, so that trams from two directions were blocked. Every one in the world would be late for dinner. Nothing would move again. The block by now would be miles long. Back, way back, in Baltimore, in Washington, in San Francisco, in Honolulu . . . people would be held up, cursing Stephanie. The business of the United States would be at a standstill. There would be international complications—another Great War. . . .

" Well say, what's eating you ? Step on her, can't you ? "

" What do I step on, for God's sake ? "

I stepped on everything. I tore everything from its socket except the hand-brake, which I left gripping Stephanie's vitals. Yet Stephanie awoke to the fact that she was fool-proof. She moved in a series of appalling spasms with a loud grinding noise. We were safe in a side street before she fainted again. Collecting our fluttering wits sufficiently to take off the brake at last, we rolled for two hours about the wet trackless wastes of suburban Philadelphia, trying to find a way to

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Radnor without crossing cruel Broad Street again  
By a miracle we fell over Radnor in the dark. . . .

We know knobs better now. After that Stephanie took the matter into her own hands and we could only sit in turns at her steering-wheel and admire her spirit. She loved to leap ahead at thirty or forty miles an hour, and once, passing a stout, road-filling Cadillac, she skidded in soft gravel and bounded from the road into the virgin forests of Maryland. Only a very solid object can stop a highly-strung car like Stephanie when her gasolene is up. In this case it was the trunk of a fallen tree combined with the frenzied entreaties of her driver that reminded her of her duty. She sustained a cracked wind-shield and a sprained head-light and had to put herself into the hands of a Ford surgeon.

Great minds, it is said—and said far too often—think alike, and Stephanie found herself continually arriving in the same cities as Maréchal Foch, who was at that time touring the States, receiving the freedom of cities he probably intended never to visit again, and accepting swords of honour which it is hoped the League of Nations will never allow him to use. He had everything America could give him—except a Ford. We saw him often, making shift with a Pierce Arrow, whistling up excited main streets, pressed in with a full measure of compressed military minions. I admit we never managed to pass him—but then in the South no one ever passes any one. Every one is stuck in a bog all the time.

Upon the roads of North and South Carolina and of Georgia it is at least an æsthetic pleasure to get bogged. The roads are the only vivid



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things in the South. The colour of gumbo is a dazzling rust, sometimes a bright vermilion. Gumbo is of a glue-like consistency, most useful in its proper place—no doubt it would mend china or weld iron or add body to chewing-gum ; as the foundation of a highway, however, it would disconcert a stronger character than Stephanie. There are always two ruts on a gumbo road. They are two feet deep or more, yet a hardy Ford can flounder along them at a spanking three miles an hour, until it meets another Ford floundering along in the opposite direction on the same pair of ruts. Every one then alights from both Fords and sinks irritably into knee-high gumbo. The drivers argue for a while and then he of the strongest character blithely helps the more pliable party to heave the latter's Ford into the bottomless outer gumbo. Then there is weeping and gnashing of teeth until a cynical passing mule consents—for a consideration—to haul the unfortunate out. There is none of that romantic brotherhood-of-the-road stuff in the Carolinas.

There are tears in the air of that country in the winter, in spite of the persistent laughter of the negroes. The thin woods brood like rain-clouds ; the cotton-fields are desolate and dripping, and untidy tufts of dirty white cotton still cling to the plants. Cotton was an unappreciated crop that year, and on all the waste places of the plantations were great bales of unsold cotton rotting in the rain. One saw cardinal birds sometimes—beads of flying fire—but they seemed to have no song. The only cheerful voices were those of the negroes ; whole villages of negroes, it seemed, had nothing to do but laugh in cracked

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foolish voices. They laughed when they fell off their mules or when they went to church or when their buggies had to capsize in the ditches to make room for Stephanie or when they sold us new-laid eggs or asked us to what church we were affiliated or gave us wrong directions with expansive gestures.

Alabama, Mississippi and Louisiana are swamp states and all their trees are bearded with Spanish moss. To Southerners trees so festooned are, I suppose, as genial and domestic as ivied oaks are to us. But I think that this grisly grey lichen is one of the most mean and furtive-looking inventions of nature. My heart sinks now when I remember it; it seems to me the banner of a weeping land. That is the South that stays in my mind; New Orleans did not dispel the impression, nor brisk Atlanta, nor scholastic Athens high on a sunny hill. Even the memory of a two days' wait for the Mobile ferry at Daphne, a sunny windy village with a generous and radiantly humble little inn under great live-oak trees, a place with a silver beach sloping to the jade-grey Gulf of Mexico at its feet—remains an isolated memory.

*The Little World.* 1925.

## XXXIII

FREDERICK NIVEN

### Canada West

VASTNESS—that is the word. That is the Open Sesame to any impression of this land, and to simplify the task of conveying it a bisectonal treatment at once suggests itself. The Prairie Provinces, and other vast tracts northward, to the Rocky Mountains; the Rocky Mountains to the Pacific Coast: that will be the order of our going.

And first it is necessary to go back some way; not so deeply as to inflict a geological or antiquarian treatise on readers, but the better to convey that sense of vastness essential to feeling the land as its peoples feel it.

At the quarries near Tyndal, in Manitoba, geologists have gone down like divers, where there is no sea now, and brought up for our enlightenment and wonder rocks scrawled upon with arabesque of seaweed and stamped with ammonites and other ancient shells as leaves are pressed between the pages of an old book. And away at the other end of this tremendous land, in a region of the kind that the early French voyageurs called *mauvaises terres*, much like the

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Bad Lands of Dakota, antiquarians have found megalosaurus and plesiosaurus, and have chiselled out a monstrous thing that has the neck of a snake and a crocodile's head, the flying pterodactyl. These creatures they have found on either side of a stretch of the Red Deer River, a stream much narrower now than it was five million years ago. The history of the land since then until more or less recent years has been but of slow geological change, and of the seasons, the scorching heat of summer, the stinging flurry of the dry winter snow.

Vastness—vastness, from the flat plains of what is now Manitoba to that surge of rocks that the Indians called “the backbone of the world,” and we have named the Rocky Mountains. After the seaweed and the pterodactyls had been all laid away in sand and pressed down as in the leaves of a book, there was grass; and antelope herds and bison (commonly called buffalo) herds wandered over that vastness. We know little—next to nothing—of the early history of men there. But two stories of their migrations (old stories, or recent stories, according to how one considers time) survive in their legends and are ratified linguistically.

Long ago a band of the great Dakota (or Sioux) nation, called Assiniboines, that is to say, Stone Sioux, because of their custom of cooking their food with hot stones, left the centres of their tribe, somewhere about where Minnesota and Dakota now are—one dim tradition says because of a feud arising out of the faithlessness of a Dakota Helen—and journeyed northward to discover what lay across that flat immensity. Thus we have the

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Assiniboine River, to which these Assiniboines came on that trek.

When I first went west as a boy that big parallelgram that is now South Saskatchewan was called Assiniboia. On the maps of the very early travellers you may see the location of these Indians marked, to the best of their hearing, by the words "Assini poets." In their own way these copper-hued explorers were poets! The old restlessness persisted, urging some of them, later, westward along the banks of the river to which they had come.

Any one who has seen the indigo blur of the Rockies along the western prairie's edge will realize how, raising that in the immensity, these Assiniboines kept on. From north to south the mountains extend, in summer time as a thickening of the base of the sky, as though its colour had run down and solidified there. And over them, from north to south, are spectacular sunsets, the white cloud mountains above the ones of stone turning gold, turning pink, then lit with hues as of calamitous fire and smoke before the final crumbling into night. In the spring and late autumn and winter the Rockies are a ragged white selvedge of the sky. But it was in summer that the Assiniboines saw them first.

The Blackfeet Indians, into whose territory they had then come, as it happened were away from their centre *en masse* on a great buffalo hunt, and so without let or hindrance the Assiniboines continued on their way. They entered into the pass through which the Canadian Pacific Railway now runs. They saw. They admired. But when at last they turned back they found the Blackfeet,

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io had returned to their central camps, about where the city of Calgary now stands, inquiring to the trail that they had left.

In the battle that ensued the Assiniboines had fall back westwards. One or two subsequent tempts they made to pass eastward, but always the Blackfeet were ready for them. Yet such was the valour of this little band that the Blackfeet first not pursue them among the natural fortresses of the foothills. Then philosophically the Assiniboines considered that it was a great and goodly land to which they had come, and there they are to this day—Stony Indians, which is merely the Anglicizing of Assiniboine, a clan of the great Lakota (or Lacota) nation. So one of their legends tells us, and their speech and certain manners and customs verify that legend.

Of another great flitting across these vast lands, this time from north to south, we learn similarly. Up toward the Arctic Circle there was internecine strife in a tribe of the Athapaskan stock. So bitter and bloody it was that at last the old men of the tribe pled for a truce and a pow-wow. They arraigned the people on the folly of it. The result was a decision to draw lots. The faction that lost would then migrate away so many moons (months as we say) in any direction they saw fit. That drawing of lots would, no doubt, be done by the old method of a long and a short stick held between closed palms.

In the history of the west along the foothills east of the Rocky Mountains one comes across references to this exodus. Down through that vastness, out of the Land of Little Sticks (the north woods), across the rolling western prairie,

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always with the Rockies to right of them, blue with silver veins of snow, and high cliffs morning after morning mirroring the dawn, these people moved, the ordained moons. Bits of that old trail trodden down by these moccasined feet, and by the dogs that hauled the *travois*, we travel on now in our motor cars. It passed close to Calgary. It continued to where the city of Helena is, in Montana. What old-timers still speak of as "the old MacLeod trail" their predecessors referred to as "the old north trail." And down in Arizona to-day are the Apaches and the Navajoes, speaking a dialect of the Athapaskan tongue.

These are the only two movements of aboriginal men, in that vastness, of which we know.

When the Company of Adventurers of England trading into Hudson Bay began their adventuring, what struck them first, as it must strike any sensitive mind to-day, even when the antelope and the buffalo are gone and you look upon wheat from horizon to horizon, was the vastness, the immensity of the territories into which they adventured. Their trading posts were dotted from Hudson Bay itself down into Astoria, which is now Washington State. News of the doings in old Europe reached their distant outposts two years after their occurrence. The pelts from Astoria passed up the Arrow Lakes to the great bend of the Columbia, thence up Canoe River, then were portaged, carried through the mountains to the prairies, shipped down Saskatchewan to Winnipeg, which was then Fort Garry, and thence continued by river, lake, and portage, to Montreal.

Immensity. Vastness. During the ensuing

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years many explorers journeyed through these lands, cheerfully planning where they would winter this year, where they would winter next year: Samuel Hearne, Sir John Franklin, Sir Alexander Mackenzie, David Thompson, Alexander Henry, Pierre Gaultier de La Vérendrye, the Frobishers, Pierre Esprit Radisson, and the rest. In the annals of this land these names seem to come out of long and long ago. And yet, considering its antiquity (the arabesques of seaweed on the rocks at Tyndal, the pterodactyls by the Red Deer River), it is only the other day they passed this way. The Hudson's Bay Company had its rivals in the North-West Fur Company; the firm of Revillon Frères had not been imagined.

Even to-day, travelling through the land by train, alighting nowhere, but just watching the unfolding, hour after hour, of space and space again, the impression persists of a vast land. There are those who, looking out of the car windows, feel to the marrow of their bones that they could never live there. That billiard-board under the arch of sky terrifies them. Yet to be out and about in it is a very different matter.

The early fur-traders, of course, on coming out, were wont to spread reports that it was a howling wilderness, and to asseverate they would not live there unless they had to. To prevent an influx of population they centralized upon the harsher aspects. They told of blizzards in winter cutting across the flat prairie, blizzards that blinded a man so that he could not see his camp were it no more than a hundred yards away. They told—though perhaps this sounded, to some ears, like a long-bow yarn—of how in the afternoons of



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blazing hot summer days there would come over the world's horizon, as it were over the flat edge of the sea, a little cloud no larger than a man's hand, but of a warning colour, discharging, after the terrific heat, hailstones as large as hazel-nuts ; yes, as large as bantams' eggs. They did not tell of the lure of these distances, of the prairie flowers, of the songs of birds, of the great migrations of the ducks and geese, so cloud-like that, passing under the sun, they sent shadows over the land. And if to praise the country had been their object instead of to disparage it, they would not, perhaps, have even tried to tell of one thing that called them back : the cry of a loon across the misted lakes at morning. For what is the call of a bird to lure a man !

Yet others besides the servants of that Company of Adventurers began to arrive here, and with the intention of remaining. These, to state the case mildly, were not welcomed. In the books of history you may read, for example, of the treatment accorded by the fur-traders to the Scots agricultural settlers who came into the land under the auspices of Lord Selkirk. The aim of this book is not, however, that of a historical work. No more of early history need be told here than is necessary for a realization of the vastness of this land.

And here is transition period come definitely. From then till to-day it has always been transition period in that wide north-west. Leave it for ten years—yes, five—and return, and you will see. It is as if the land had its destiny and men are but the unwitting servitors of that. The fur-traders had no desire, touching the land, save to

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conserve it as wilderness ; intruders, but hardly to be called innovators, introducing to its inhabitants a necklace of beads for one of shells, a flintlock rifle in place of bow and arrows, no more. But the first slit made by a plough in one small corner of the pastures of the buffalo and grassy coverts of the prairie chicken—that was an ominous gash indeed. There were those who realized that—or, at least, that it might be.

Many of the French voyageurs who rowed the York boats and paddled the birch-bark canoes taking in the "trade," taking out the furs, for the Hudson's Bay Company, had married Indian women. There were settlements, thus, of French half-breeds. And now the dread of an influx of population, that had troubled the factors of the Hudson's Bay Company earlier, affected these. Their first rebellion broke out in 1869, on the transference to the Crown of the Hudson's Bay Company's domain. The second occurred in 1885. Many of their grievances were utterly valid, and leading members of the North-West Mounted Police realized that, and that the Government's attitude to them was despotic. A miserable business.

There are many who can recall, very clearly, incidents of that second Riel rebellion. To hear them talk is to realize how swiftly, the dam once broken, the flood poured through. In their stories we hear a strange sound across that immensity, the scream of the ungreased wooden wheels of the old Red River carts. It carried for miles. Where the transport (apart from the winter's dog-team and sled) was not by rivers in canoes and York boats, it was in brigades of these primitive con-

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veyances. Day in, day out, that shrill scream accompanied their long journeys, and large brigades could be heard before they came over the horizons.

But the Riel rebellions have been written of frequently now, not only in volumes, but in reminiscitory articles in such Canadian journals as *MacLean's Magazine*, and in the annual of the North-West Mounted Police, *Scarlet and Gold*. It was chiefly the plains Crees and Assiniboines that the half-breeds won over as allies. What Blackfeet or Sioux came to their aid were with them as freelances, not as tribes at war. Many a story you can hear, from those who lived then, of savage terrorism and cruelty, many a story too of savage tolerance for the sake of some old service rendered—the Indian being built like that and the quality active unless when he has had his fill of white man's fire-water.

It was in the year of the completion of the trans-continental railway by the insertion of the link through the north-shore woods (of Superior, that is) and through the Lake of the Woods and Rainy River country, that the second Riel rebellion broke out. In the building of that link the engineers, in several places, came across traces of the military road, overgrown by a tangling luxuriance of scrub, that Wolseley's engineers had sweated upon so short a time before for the passage of troops toward the quelling of the first rebellion. Willow-herb and wild berry-bushes, even then, made that an old story. Settlers for Western Canada from Eastern Canada, prior to the insertion of that link, passed into the North-West Territories through the United States of America.

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A neighbour of mine who would be grieved, or amused perhaps, if one were to call him old—though he might admit himself as at the beginning of elderly—has told me of his entrance by Chicago, where he bought bullocks and a wagon (bullocks and a wagon in Chicago!) for the northward saunter to take up a homestead. Odd what a radiance, in retrospect, enfolds days that, before memory had them to winnow, were arduous and even desperate. Yet there was a thrill of escape, too, which atoned for the hardships. And a strange necessity, a compulsion beyond full explanation, urged such men.

Another way of entering the country in those days that seem so distant because of the celerity of change, was from Fort Benton on the Missouri. River steamers from as far as Saint Louis churned up the Mississippi, took a turning to the left (the Missouri) and steamed on. Sometimes they stuck upon sand-bars of that silty river, and during these years of unrest among the buffalo-hunting copper-skinned nomads, who were adread of what the end of white invasion might mean, a steamboat with the ill-luck to go aground upon a sand-bar was sometimes a target for shots from Indians on the bluffs on either side. Necessity is the mother of invention. What may best be described as stilts were affixed to the hulls of these vessels, one on each side, the lower end of each pointing forward. From the upper ends cables were rigged to a capstan or winch. Boats coming up too early in the spring, before the river was in freshet, going on a sand-bar simply kept nosing into it. At the same time the capstan began to revolve. The butt-ends of the stilts thrust down

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as, slowly, the upper ends were dragged ahead. A splash, a swirl, a churning of sand, a whoop from the pilot—the steamer was over the bar and deep-breathing upon her way. That's how many came to Canada's Far West then, disembarking at old Fort Benton, and crossing the prairies (rolling prairies there in many places) northward, in the slow bullock-drawn wagons. Or perhaps they would buy horses, at five dollars a head or so, from Indians there, and ride north upon their way, keeping guard at night lest other Indians, seeing these horses, should attempt to stampede them.

Those were the days of vastness without railway or barbed wire. The North-West Mounted Police (in 1904 Royal North-West Mounted Police and more recently merged and lost in the Royal Canadian Mounted Police), a seemingly pitifully small force to patrol so wide a region, kept order among white and red, and established a tradition that was to last for years, a tradition of a certain sort of heroism. I say a certain sort because of many well-authenticated stories of the sheer effrontery, the nerve of its examples. The cattle industry, that had for years flourished on the grassy lands from Texas to Montana, had a northerly extension. From the foothills of Alberta to far down the Assiniboine River the buffalo range became cattle country. The buffalo herds had almost gone, though the antelopes still scurried on their slender shanks before the riders.

I was talking recently to one of these old cattlemen. He is one who cannot cordially accept what is called progress. His gaze is wistfully upon the past. He told me of the great spring round-up

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that began near Calgary, and continued far down into Montana. The object of it was to cut out from the wandering herds the steers of each individual ranch, and drive them home again. He told me all about the Stock Association of those days, of the method of electing round-up foremen (recalling, in an aside, one who, though a full-blood Blackfoot Indian, was once unanimously chosen by his white fellows); how, returning to the ranch near Calgary, there was only time for a little rest before the fall round-up—or the beef round-up. Its object was the shipment of the steers eastward. And never a strand of barbed wire from Calgary to the Yellowstone.

Incidents of those old days have their memorials in place-names, such as Medicine Hat and Pincher Creek. And names on the prairies, such as Kipps, not deflecting the average traveller of to-day for one moment from his survey of the menu-card, give a pinch to the hearts of old-timers. The steward is kept waiting, the menu-card forgotten, while they look out at seemingly nothing, or next to nothing, a little red-painted house with a name (of import for them) in white upon its gable, a section-gang standing by till the train has passed, a roll of coulée and a white cloud frothing up beyond.

The locomotive whistle hooted across the expanses, over the sigh of wind in the grass or through the peppering of the winter snow; and the screaming of the ungreased wooden wheels of the old Red River carts was dying away, soon to be gone, only a memory.

There is something ironic in the fact that those who are driven by some strange urge, and as it

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were a heady impatience with sophistication, to the frontiers and the sparsely peopled parts of the earth, loving elbow-room, prepare a way for those who are miserable unless they can rub shoulders with their kind. With the completion of the trans-continental railway, demanded by the early settlers for the shipment of their produce, there arrived in greater numbers young men of that restless spirit. There was, so far, only the one railway track, a very thin thread, close to the base of that vast land. These young men disembarked from the train on station platforms the planks of which still smelt new from the sawmills, to the rear side of which stood high-saddled horses with deceptively drooping heads and apparently no more vigour than to swish flies from their haunches with hock-long tails ; and ramshackle-looking conveyances of the kind called buck-board and democrat, from homes perhaps invisible over the expanse. They were at least in at the death, or the birth, as you please.

American farmers from Kansas, or from Illinois and Ohio, which had become too greatly populated for them, were coming in overland in the ancient way, with canvas-covered wagons for a moving home, their sons, restless as they, and fired by the stories of earlier migrations told by their fathers, driving the herds of cattle and horses on either side. The old phrases still endured as living speech. There was still that omnipresent sense of vastness, intoxicating. They told you how they had been " out of sight of land." It was as if to them, from these great leagues, the water had just receded and might again flow, as though across a vaster Solway sands

## CANADA WEST

on the transit of which they adventured. The phrase was not extravagant. It conveyed the impression of that tardy crawl day by day with only the sigh of wind in the bunch-grass for company like the lapping of a wave. And then over the horizon, one day, there would be a blue cloud, a low blue cloud, that darkened and eventually became hills—Cypress Hills perhaps. Their covered wagons they called prairie schooners. The first of those who came in on the new railway saw all that.

The locomotives that drew their trains made many peculiar sounds. You could tell, sitting in the coaches, what was on the track ahead by listening to these sounds. Sometimes the whistle would emit a series of short blasts, the nearest approach of a whistle to the barking of a dog. That would indicate sheep upon the track. Sometimes there would be prolonged roars in an attempt to startle steers away from between the metals. Sometimes there would be a hissing of steam, and if you walked on to a car-platform and, taking hold, craned out a little way, you would see the antelopes scurry. A fire-guard was ploughed on either side of the track. I forget how many ploughs were lashed together and how many horses drew them. But they made an impressive team for one man on his perch to handle. From Winnipeg to Calgary was that broad fire-guard on either side of the track so that sparks from the engines would not set fire to the grass.

Transition period, always transition period. The buffalo had gone and his bones were numbered. The Indians, who had lived on him—had made



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their tepees from his hide, their needles from his bones, glue from his hoofs—were out on the great plains shovelling up his osseous remains into wagons, driving them into Calgary, Medicine Hat, Swift Current, Indian Head, for sale to middlemen who shipped them away east. “Imperious Cæsar dead, and turned to clay, might stop a hole to keep the wind away.” That noble-looking beast, the buffalo, became fertilizer, I suppose, in eastern factories.

*Canada West.* 1930.

## XXXIV

STEPHEN GRAHAM

### Downtown New York

I STARTED off from South Ferry one night upon a zigzag walk. Sleepless tramps were huddled in the seats in Battery Park ; others were lying on the grass, flat and dazed as if they had fallen from balloons. There were hoots and howls from across the river, red lights, and green lights, the hum-grum of machinery, and the strange electric-light cascade of moving elevated trains. 'Twas one by the clock. Syria slept. Greece slept.

I walked by Front Street to Moore Street, to Water Street, to Broad, to Pearl, to Coenties Slip, to Stone, to Mill Lane, to South William Street, to Broad again, past a blank empty lighted telegraph office, to Exchange Place, to New Street, to Wall Street. Thus I arrived at the financial anvil of the world. But all was still, no hammering, no bellows blowing, no flying sparks. Yellow stars looked down on the deserted Exchange. But I saw what appeared to be some Pagan temple, a stark altar of human sacrifice, and it proved to be a famous Christian church, none other than Holy Trinity on Broadway, and as I stood by the strange little graveyard the church clock struck

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half-past one. The little white headstones looked like the dead popping up from the tomb. There was heard the resounding hoot of a steamer on the river—yea, the last trump. Fast cars scooted along wet empty Broadway as if fleeing the wrath to come—and all were going up town.

Then I went on by Little Thames Street, and felt for a moment as if I were in part of the City of London. It also is deserted in the regions of Capel Court at that hour of the night. There are no night-shifts in stockbroking. You do not see a relief of stenographers being marched up Wall Street by a Managing Clerk; the stenographer's relief is prancing in the White Friars and Tango-land.

I was in Cedar Street and Greenwich Street, walking under the "El" like a rat, and came to Liberty Street—O Liberty, most empty was thy street—and to Washington above that sleeping Syria and sleeping Greece, and so, going by Cortland Street, I came to West Street and its great market. It was two o'clock, and New York here was very much alive.

There were horse-wagons and motor-wagons, cases and baskets of vegetables and fruit, and porters innumerable hurrying hither and thither with gleaming white-wood boxes on their shoulders. I emerged from the dead city, where never a blade of grass twinkles before square toes, and came into a fairyland of cucumbers and corn, cabbages and melons, and Malaga grapes. Refreshing fruit odours invaded the nostrils.

Heaps of small black grapes looked in the dim light like exaggerated caviare. I kicked a peach as I walked along. What largesse in the night,

## DOWNTOWN NEW YORK

peaches are like stones in the roadway! They tumbled from wooden troughs and buckets uncovered and overfilled. There were South Mountain oranges and California lemons. There were crates of greens stacked higher than men. There were cabinets of blackberries and raspberries. The nose whispered to the heart "Raspberries, raspberries" as it tasted the air. Coloured porters with perspiring gleaming faces shouldered boxes of green varnish-surfaced peppers along narrow alleyways between piles of other boxes. Carrots peeped out of their ventilated crates like brown ribbons. Side streets were blocked with potatoes and yams. Activity, activity, activity—and quietude. The workers do not help themselves along with foul expletives and abuse as in London. They seem to be conserving their energy, or imitating the electric lamps which do their job and say nothing about it. But it is a big market, bigger than Covent Garden in London, and I reflected that New Yorkers eat more fruit and vegetables than we do. There is more for them to eat. Their reserves are greater.

The quayside beyond the market is long and spacious and empty. The freer air seems to be minus something—is it the mental ozone of New York? West Street is a long backyard. It has no mechanical turnings on the left. If you wish to take a turning on the left, the way of the heart, you must take a ship. There are ships in the wharves still as birds dozing head on wing in a covert at night. Not a rustle nor a whisper comes from the giant Cunarder. West Street is the landing-stage of the Atlantic ferry. You stand on West Street and you think Southampton.

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You stand in West Street and you think Havana, San Juan, Cristobal, Panama, Valparaiso. You stand on West Street and think Cherbourg, Naples, the Piræus. But now no one is thinking anything. The gangways may be down, but no one is on them. Eastward New York's luminosity lies in layers like masonry of light and darkness built from the rocks to the night-sky. Westward lies the beautiful river flowing away to the calm ocean. And on the wide roadway of the quay laden lorries rush and crash bearing produce to the market or away.

I sought a turning on the left and did not find one till 14th Street. It was a lonely walk. A drunken man sitting on a bit of paving addressed me vaguely. He was looking at the heavens with lack-lustre eye.

"There's only one star left. How far's that from here?" he queried.

I passed an empty "Goulash Kitchen," passed standing freight cars, passed the embarkation for Tampa and Mobile, passed the Boston and Providence pier, passed the R.M.S.P., passed the Hoboken Ferry and entered the Gansevoort market stirring feebly. A black-and-white cat was squatting in the roadway fastidiously eating melon.

My turning to the left proved to be the virtual one of Eleventh Avenue where it starts North near West 14th Street, and there, like a derelict trolley-car left stranded on the ooze after the subsidence of a flood, was a windowed shed with the explicit word LUNCH printed on it. This was kept by a lonely Greek.

"Where do you come from?" I asked, perched

## DOWNTOWN NEW YORK

on my revolving stool at the counter and munching pie.

"Island," he answered.

"What? From Ireland? You don't look it."

"No. Island. Crete. Greek, yes."

"Fine country."

"No. Some nations go up. Some nations go down. The great Alexander thousand year ago take whole world. Then Venetians come. Before Jesus. Romans. Yes, the French. Napoleon. Germans. Now English, I guess."

"Not Americans?"

"No, English now. But in two hundred year maybe England go down. Other nation rise up."

"How d'ye like New York?"

"Not like it. Bad place here. Kill you for a dime. Drinks bad poison. Good drink cost big money. Not like New York."

A friend from the island of Rhodes rolled in for his morning coffee on his way to work at the National Biscuit Factory. "Rhodes no good. Italians there. They turn out Greeks. New York fine. Plenty money. Rodos bad."

I said Good-morning and Good-bye, and walked out on to 14th Street, turned into Tenth Avenue and then into West 15th Street where the "fleet" of the Biscuit Company was waiting in the dark like a string of camels before dawn on the outskirts of Baghdad.

*New York Nights.* 1928.

## XXXV

ROBERT LYND

### On Going Abroad

THE worst of going abroad is that the feeling of being abroad does not last beyond a few days unless one goes still further abroad to a new place. How exciting is the first day in Dieppe, with houses of a different shape and a different colour from the houses to which one is accustomed and with the names and the trades of the shopkeepers all seeming novel and fantastical! How much more charming still is Italy, with the shop-fronts painted all over with words ending in "o" and "ia" and "a"! Even such a word as "bot-tiglieria" seems to speak of a wine-bar in wonder-land, and every jeweller's and haberdasher's and silk-merchant's gives as much pleasure to the fancy as if it were a shop discovered under the ocean with a merman for shopwalker and a con-course of mermaids serving at the counters. The look of the streets is so strange that one walks through them with a kind of secret smile. The policemen are different. The cabs are different. The boys selling lottery tickets on the pavements, the Fascisti lurching along in their black shirts,

## ON GOING ABROAD

the monks in their sandals, are all figures that break in with the effect of surprise on common experience, and for a few days one almost mistakes novelty for Paradise. For a few days one even finds oneself assiduously going into churches in a spirit of exaltation simply because they are not the churches of the city in which one lives. As for the food, how charming, if it is edible, is the first meal after one's arrival in a strange town! I confess I am incapable of criticizing the food in a foreign country—always excepting such dishes as boiled mussels, braised lettuces, etc.—for twenty-four hours after arrival. Even the *vin ordinaire*—which, to be quite honest, is usually no better than the ordinary wine at an English wine-merchant's—seems worth a compliment at the first two meals, and, if one is of a romantic disposition, it may be a month or more before one discovers how bad it is. Time passes, however, and, even though abroad, we begin to feel at home. Things no longer please us merely because they are novel. We pass the shops with as little interest as if they bore above their windows such accustomed inscriptions as "Family Butcher," "Stationer," or "Italian Warehouseman." We cease to notice that the policemen look different from any other policemen. The trams no longer excite us by their unusual colour and design. The streets become our familiar walks. We find it extraordinarily easy to pass a church without going inside. The flavour of the food becomes monotonous. Our palate recovers its rectitude, and becomes critical of the wines. We realize that we were the victims of an illusion, and that we could have preserved the illusion only by



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going further and reviving it in another country or, at least, in another town. I am not sure that the illusion is worth having at the price, but many men have become nomads in pursuit of it, travelling from country to country as though no country could be delightful after it was known. They are lovers of the surface, easily enamoured of many places, but passionately in love with none. They hanker after China and Arabia, because they were not born there. If they had been born in China or Arabia, they would have hankered after England, and a week-end at Brighton would have seemed to them like an episode in a legend. A great deal of travel, indeed, is little more than restlessness—a continual pursuit of novelty of sensation—and springs from the dread of the boredom of custom. It is as if a man wished to sit on a painted horse—and on a new kind of painted horse every day—in a perpetual merry-go-round.

There are, I know, profounder pleasures to be got later on from foreign places than these superficial excitements over novelties. But they are the same pleasures in kind that are to be had at home. The senses are no longer the supreme means of enjoyment, but the affections are engaged, and we love the things around us all the more because they are familiar. We no longer live in obedience to a guide-book, but have made a new map of the place for ourselves in which many sights that the guide-book exalts are left out and many things not mentioned in the guide-book stand out as prominently as museums and cathedrals. Not that I would speak ill of guide-books. I cannot comfortably go about with one

## ON GOING ABROAD

in my hand or consult it in public with eyes that glance backwards and forwards between the book and some ruined temple or great man's tomb. But I like to have one by me for an occasional private hint, and I like, on getting back to the hotel after a morning spent in sight-seeing, to take up the guide-book and see what I have seen, and also what I have missed. I feel a little humiliated if, after having gone half across Europe and spent a morning in one of the show-places of the world, I have on coming home to answer "No" to the questions: "Did you see this?" "Did you find that?" "Did you notice that wonderful so-and-so? Oh, what a pity? It's the gem of the whole place." The guide-book judiciously studied will save you from many of these humiliations, though not from all, for the ordinary traveller is a jealous being and will not be content till he has proved that you have overlooked the thing without parallel—that, if you have seen the right picture, you have seen it in the wrong light by going in the afternoon instead of the morning—that your day spent in visiting some famous church was wasted because you didn't see the cloisters, as the cloisters are the only thing that raises it above fifty other churches of the same kind. So far as I can judge, it is the object of many travellers to convince some poor fellow-creature just returned from abroad that he might as well have stayed at home, and that he has not used any of his opportunities. They even try to prove that you have eaten in the wrong restaurants, taken the wrong guide-book, and stayed at the wrong hotel. They beam with a horrible philanthropy as they condole with you over what you

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have missed. But you know all the time that they are secretly enjoying your poverty of experience and congratulating themselves on their own riches. When I was younger, and bolder than I am now, I could have stood up to these people better, and told them with half-truth that I hate sight-seeing, and that, of the famous sights that I have seen, not more than half have given me more pleasure than I could get in a London park. I have now a sort of cowardly longing to see everything that everybody talks about, though the pleasure of seeing many of these things is little more than the pleasure of curiosity satisfied. The trouble is that the imagination is not a slave that will take orders from us and that will respond as it is expected to respond at all times and in all places. We go in its company to see a great picture, and stand waiting for its verdict. If we held a dialogue with it, we should say on many such occasions : " Come now. This is one of the great pictures of the world. Everybody says so. At least, everybody says so except the people who always contradict what everybody says. Don't you admire it, too ? You don't seem very enthusiastic. Don't you think it very good ? " And the imagination would—at least, now and then—reply : " I don't know whether it's good or not, and to-day I don't care. You dragged me here against my will, when I would rather you had sat down in a chair outside a café and watched the buses passing. Besides, picture-galleries always depress me. The human beings in them never look natural. Many of them look like uneasy ghosts that have wandered into the wrong hell. The ones that are enjoying themselves and expressing

## ON GOING ABROAD

their enjoyment aloud are still more disturbing. I can't help listening to them, and one cannot be absorbed in the conversation of one's fellow-creatures and in the Holy Family at the same time. If you had brought me here yesterday, I might have felt differently, so I shan't go so far as to say that the picture is positively bad. But to-day I simply don't enjoy looking at it. Don't let's bother any more about pictures to-day. Come along to a café." And how gladly we should go!

When once you have settled down and feel really at home in a new place, you need no longer drag your imagination about in this fashion, seeing the things you ought to see instead of the things you wish to see. The resident alien in London does not visit Westminster Abbey with a guide-book, nor does he even go into the National Gallery except when it is the whim of his imagination to do so. If he likes London, it is not because of the things that are marked as important in the guide-books about London. It is because of the things that he discovers capriciously and by accident. He can live in his own London, not in other people's London. London becomes to him a city of personal associations and is no longer a mere capital of famous sights. We are sometimes told that the American visitor sees more of London than the people who live in it. This, I think, is true only in a superficial sense. The American sees more of guide-book London, but the Londoner sees more of the London that is worth seeing. He sees his own house and his friend's houses—buildings that contain far more of the things that make life

## MODERN TRAVEL

interesting to him than cathedrals and palaces and museums of the arts. He sees his own garden, which contains more pleasures for him than the greatest of the parks, and he sees his own cat, which surpasses the King's horses or the lordliest beast in the Zoo as the paragon of animals. And do not think that he does not see as many novelties as if he were taxi-ing from church to church and from museum to museum in a foreign city. The seasons alone should give a man all the novelties he needs. The very street in which he lives changes from hour to hour. It is one street when the sun is shining, another street in rain, and another under the full moon. Foreign travel is pleasant chiefly because it makes us realize that we are among novelties, but when we are sufficiently awake to see the constant flow of novelties in the world at our doors, we can enjoy all the excitement of foreign travel along with the pleasure of being at home. The worst of it is that, though I know this, I also know that if I had a fortune I should spend some of it in Florence, and a little in Assisi, and might even be tempted as far as Athens. But no further. I don't mind reading about the ends of the earth in fiction, or in travel-books, but I trust that, if I ever see them, it will be many years hence and from a window in Heaven. If I were offered a free trip round the world, I might accept the offer through weakness, but I do not wish to go round the world. Have I not been round the sun once a year ever since I was born? That seems to have satisfied any cravings I may have had for distant travel, or at least to have made a jaunt round this pigmy earth a matter of small consequence. Besides, I

## ON GOING ABROAD

should hate to meet all those people who are described in the books by anthropologists. I would far rather go to Southend than to the South Seas. And I don't very much want to go to Southend.

*The Money-Box.* 1925.





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